British Museum

To the ~~City of Bath~~, July 19, 1918,
from Edward S. Dodgson. A.M.

The Marquise de Pompadour lived in the years 1721–1764.
Mr. G. F. Barwick informs me that the author
may have been François, Marquis de Barbé-Marbois.
See The Hamsted Advertiser of July 18, 1918.

Six Words of the year 1772.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE *Advertiser*.

SIR,—The "Letters of The Marchioness of Pompadour: From [illegible] 1762 inclusive," published in London, [illegible] most interesting contribution to Literature [illegible] Political History. At the British Museum [illegible] is said to be François, Marquis de [illegible] Marbois; but the name of the translator [illegible] also provides the following [illegible] Oxford Dictionary.

BED OF HONOUR. 16. [illegible] bed of honor, D. 1663, 1673 only.

BILLET. 20.... come and see [illegible] ... I love nothing but my billet [illegible] D.

HOBBY. 66. But our poor [illegible] who have nothing but their sword [illegible] their spirit, D. not in the sense of French *hobereau*.

HURON. 166....; and so a huron makes no difficulty to say: A Frenchman is a man like myself. D. not in the sense of an Indian of the Huronian region.

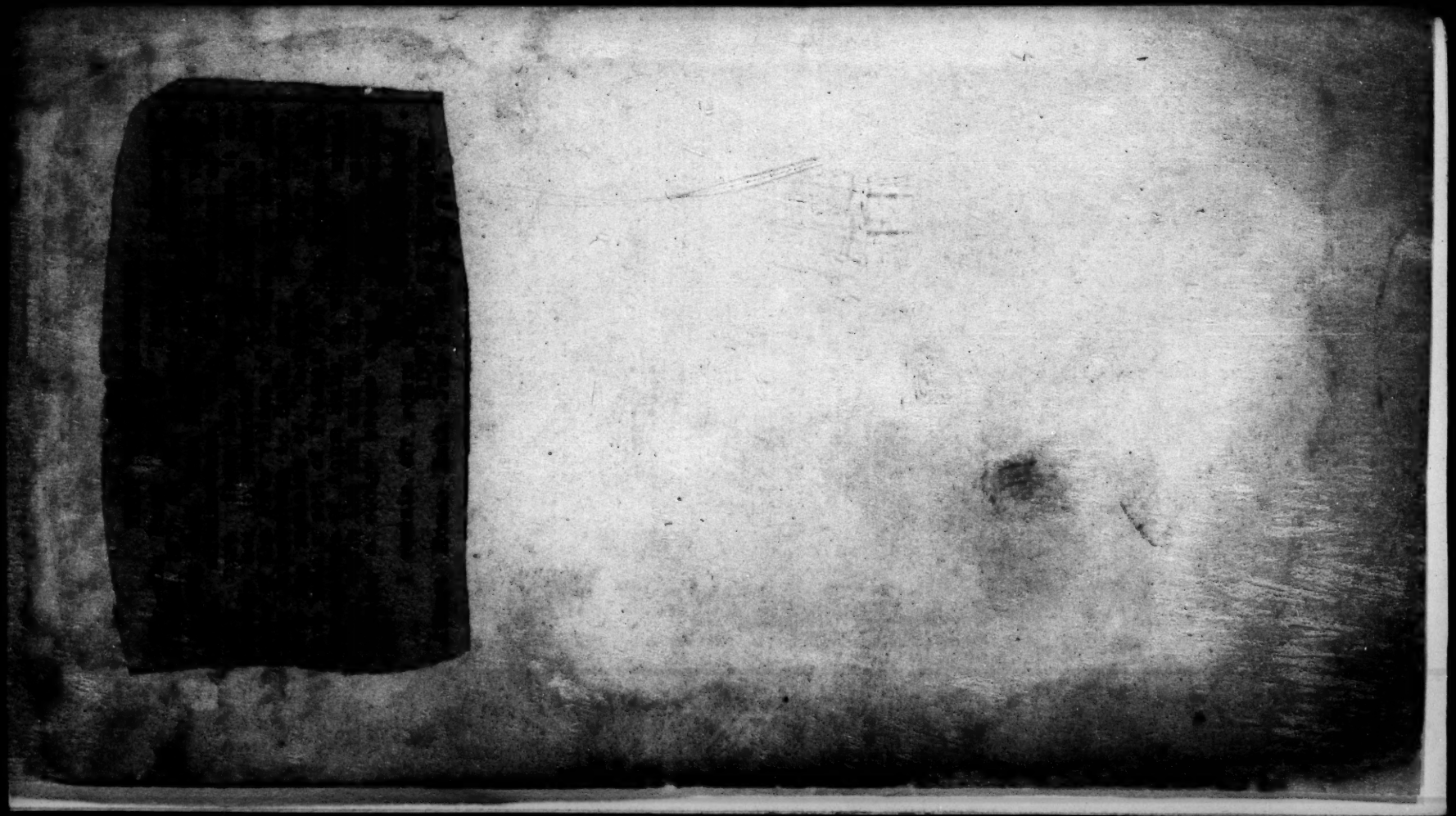
MARAT. 130....to fix the inconstant temper of the marata, D. not in the sense of a Mahratta Indian.

MAUL. 86. A ridiculous character does no harm and makes us laugh; but a vicious is a sword and a maul. D. not 1891—1607.

July 18, 1918. Yours truly,
EDWARD S. DODGSON.

Albert House, Bath.
July 4, 1918. The Hampstead Advertiser

14 54 b. 24



1454 b. 24

LETTERS

OF

THE MARCHIONESS

OF

POMPADOUR:

From MDCCXLVI to MDCCLII

inclusive.

LONDON:

Sold by T. CADELL, in the Strand.

MDCCLXXII.

1

ADVERTISEMENT.

IT were idle to inform the intelligent reader, that theſe letters are the genuine effuſions of the ſame original, engliſhed by the ſame editor, nay, printed by the ſame printer, as thoſe of the former publication.

Had the editor known earlier of this firſt part, the ſecond would not have appeared before it; but finding it, when offered him, no leſs worthy his cares, he imagines the public will find it no leſs worthy its peruſal.

ADVERTISEMENT.

Nor can it but be pleaſing, in whatever order, to obſerve Madam POMPADOUR's firſt ſix years as brilliant as the following twelve, or that elevated genius of a piece from the beginning to the end of her reign.

If the other two volumes have met the welcome they wiſhed, and ſmiled at the impotence of envy, what reception may not be expected by that, which doubles at once and completes the marchioneſſes correſpondence?

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LETTER I.

To mr. BRIDGE *, *valet de chambre to the king.* 1746.

I Thank you, my dear Bridge, for the trouble you take in my favor. Your ſtation about the king affords you the opportunity, which I can well believe your improving. But this ſingular piece of ambition requires profound ſecrecy: the plan, if it do ſucceed, muſt ſeem the mere effect of chance. The king ſaw me yeſterday, and eyed me as he paſt; he perceived my confuſion; but has not yet your eyes, and I do not know when he will. He is conſtantly beſet by women who have beauty, but have not my heart: alas! why knows he not that heart?

* An iriſh gentleman.

Madam de Mailli, they ſay, has turned devotee; and is actually under the direction of father de la Valette, general of the oratory. Ah! how happy ſhe, if really cured of her paſſion! Happy the indifferent! They tell you that ſhe went t'other day to ſermon at Notre-Dame, but, coming a little late, ſhe was obliged to diſturb ſome perſons, before ſhe could reach her pew. A brutal fellow in her way, began to cry aloud: *Hah! what a pother for a w——.* The counteſs turned towards him, and ſaid with the greateſt good-nature: *Sir, ſince you know me ſo well, be ſo good as to pray to God for me.* A truly reſpectable character! Should my weakneſs, or my ſtar, lead me into like errors, I hope I ſhall be led to like repentance. Farewel, ſir; come and ſee me to-morrow: I have many things to tell you, and many more to conceal from you.

LETTER II.

To mr. BINET. 1746.

I Wonder I have no tidings from Bridge: perhaps he has none but bad to give me, and you are both willing to deal tenderly with my weakneſs. I am almoſt fit to cry at my folly; though not yet able to repent of it. What ſays the king? Does he talk of me? Has he no deſire to ſee me? Has he any degree of value for your couſin? Deliver me, I beſeech you, from my cruel uncertainty. Alas! I begin to feel that ambition is the keeneſt of tortures, eſpecially in the heart of a woman. I want to conſult you upon a new expedient, that has come into my head; and I ſhall have uſe for you as well as for the officious duke, who continues to aſſure me ſtoutly that the

grand ſignor is caught. I look for you both. My little Alexandrina hugs you with all her heart: I hope ſhe will be wiſer and happier than her mother. Farewel, my dear couſin; do not fail to come.

LETTER III.

To marſhal SAXE. September, 1746

YOU are ever ailing, and ever beating the duke of Cumberland: this proves to your friends a ſubject at once of grief and joy. Little ſouls would ſay: Leſs glory and more health: but yours is not of the number.

Here are loud complaints againſt the proviſionmongers: thoſe harpies go to war, not to get honor, but riches: they are very bloodſuckers. You do exceeding well to check them.

A little anecdote has been brought me,

that concerns you; who have an undoubted title to know it, if you do not already. After the battle of Rocoux, the chevalier d'Aubeterre ſeeming ſtruck with the good look and warlike air of an engliſh priſoner, ſaid to him: *Had there been fifty thouſand like thee in the enemy's army, I believe we ſhould have had ſome trouble to foil it.* The ſoldier replied briſkly: *We had men enough like me, but wanted one like marſhal Saxe.* This anſwer ſpoke equal ſpirit and truth. The duke of Cumberland is to you what poor marſhal Villeroi was before the terrible Marlborough, a pigmy facing a giant. Yet he is ſaid to be a generous and magnanimous prince, though he ſtigmatized himſelf in the affair of Culloden, by mercileſly maſſacring two thouſand * highlanders, who begged their lives on their knees: but no body will diſpute

* This looks like exaggeration.

his being a bad general. As to his victory over the ſcots, theſe, though vanquiſhed, got more glory than he: twenty thouſand muſt naturally beat five: no great wonder there.

It is thought that the ſiege, of the place you are attacking, will be difficult: but is any thing difficult to you? Make quickly the conqueſt in ſpite of our politicians; then come and ſing *Te Deum* with us. You will ſee the church of Notre-Dame hung round with your trophies: you may juſtly be called its *upholſterer*, as was the duke of Luxembourg. Farewel, Mars; every body loves and longs for you.

LETTER IV.

To the counteſs of BREZE'. 1746.

YOU make me laugh with your jolly dutchman: he is ſtiff and clumſy, according to the cuſtom of his

country. I know him an unſufferable animal; yet he muſt be ſuffered, being a friend of ours. If you would have your acquaintances perfect, you muſt ſeek them among the angels. The ambaſſador, Van Hoy, is quite another perſon; he has merit, and you have reaſon to eſteem him. Nay, he is ſometimes pleaſing and ſmart, as you ſhall juſt now ſee.

The marquis de Fontaine invited him to ſupper laſt tueſday. In the deſſert, what appears, but a huge dutch cheeſe on the table? *Mr. ambaſſador*, ſays Fontaine to him, *there is fruit of your country.* At theſe words Van Hoy ſtarts up, puts his hand in his pocket, and throws upon the table a handful of ducats, ſaying: *There is ſome too.*

If you go to the Val de Grace, I beg my kindeſt regards to madam de Sennaterre. Alas! ſhe has choſen the better

part: the world deſerved not the heart which God has beſtowed upon her. Her youth and beauty attracted her immediately a croud of adorers: and now ſhe will needs be a ſaint, as if it were to make a dupe of the devil. Do not you alſo long to become a ſaint, my dear counteſs? Do as you pleaſe; but love me always.

LETTER V.

To mr. VAN HOY, *ambaſſador from the States-general at the court of France.*

April, 1747.

IT is not to me, but to the miniſter, that your excellence ſhould have written and complained. However, I am obliged by your confidence, and ſhall endeavor to deſerve it.

You know that, from the very beginning of the war, the king never

aſked aught elſe of your republic, than to ſtand neuter in this great quarrel of the principal powers of Europe; and he offered to deliver into your hands the city of Dunkirk, as a pledge of his honor. But the ſtates have conſtantly diſregarded his entreaties and his offers: they have furniſhed the enemies of France with ſuccors of every kind, under pretence of their alliance with England and the court of Vienna; they have even ſet on foot an army, which the French have taken the liberty of chaſtiſing pretty often, though always with regret. You may be ſure, that at all times the policy of France will be to require the neutrality of the ſeven provinces: it is her intereſt, and it is yours.

You now complain that the brave Maurice has entered your territory, and is taking your towns. This ſtep ap-

pears to me juſt and neceſſary: ye were deſired to be neutral, and ye would not; ye muſt therefore be compelled to it: we beg your pardon.

You ſay that the dutch will always make it their pride to be friends of France: it may be ſo, and ſo we wiſh it. But let them be complaiſant enough to give us proofs of their pride. Friends do not fight; yet marſhal Saxe has been obliged to chaſtiſe you: permit us then to doubt your ſincerity.

For yourſelf, mr. ambaſſador, the king has all the eſteem you deſerve. You condemn perhaps in ſecret the obſtinacy of your maſters. Happen what may, you will have the glory of having fulfilled your miniſtry, if not with ſucceſs, at leaſt with much wiſdom.

I am, &c.

LETTER VI.

To the marchioneſs of SAUSSAY.

April, 1747.

THE news from Holland affords here abundant ſpeculation. I foreſee that France will be forced to take the country of thoſe *golden calves*, in order to teach them wiſdom.

Our friend du Thiel has ſent me the particulars of the death of poor lord Lovat. None can dy with more courage: but he was a ſcot: the ſcots know to fight and to dy. An hour before his execution he made a hearty breakfaſt, and rallied his executioners.

He mounted the ſcaffold as chearfully as if going to an entertainment, and received the fatal ſtroke without betraying the ſmalleſt fear. Behold then all the friends of prince Edward ſacrificed one

after another: the engliſh cannot pardon. France has, methinks, done very ill in making thoſe brave people revolt, and ſtill worſe in abandoning them to the vengeance of an implacable enemy. Mens lives are not to be played with.

The drawings you ſent me are charming: the goddeſs Flora herſelf muſt have guided your fair hand. I ſhow them to every body; every body admires them, and I am ſatisfied. But I entreat you, my dear friend, to ſpare your fine eyes. Drawing ſhould be only an amuſement: do not make it an occupation. &c.

LETTER VII.

To the duke of BOUFLERS. 1747.

YOU know, my lord duke, my eſteem for you: an opportunity of hinting it has offered, nor have I let it ſlip. The king has named you to command at Genoa, which the Auſtrians

are threatening anew, but which they will threaten in vain, when the republic ſhall have you for her defender. Thoſe poor pantaloons pretend that they cannot defend themſelves.

Yet the ſingular revolution, by which the genoeſe have recovered their liberty and expelled their tyrants, will be admired in ſtory; and we ſee with ſurpriſe that, in the ſtate of humiliation to which Italy is dwindled, there ſtill remain ſome ſparks of that glorious fire which animated the ancient romans: go and fan it.

The genoeſe are uſeful friends in the preſent juncture: they have paved the way of Italy to don Philip; they there have ſecured the power of the houſe of Bourbon: let us not expoſe them to repent it. France is moreover their natural ally, and of this they are duly ſenſible. The emperors, who ſtile them-

ſelves ſucceſſors to the Ceſars, claim, in virtue of that chimerical title, the dominion of every ſtate in Italy they can lay hold of, and look upon it as a fief of the holy empire. The italian princes thus conſtantly needing a protector, can have none either ſurer or more powerful than the houſe of Bourbon.

However, you will quickly ſee that the genoeſe are turbulent, reſtleſs, and factious: for this reaſon have I counſelled the king to ſend them at once a good officer and ſound politician, capable of reconciling the minds of the leaſt tractable people upon earth. Well did Lewis XI. know them: on their ſending deputies to proffer him the ſovereignty of their commonwealth, *You deliver yourſelves to me*, ſaid that prince, *and I deliver you to the devil.* Do not you, my lord, give them to the

devil; but go and ſave them out of gratitude, and for the intereſt of your country. I ſhall ſee you before your departure, and ſhall wiſh you neither the talents nor the courage neceſſary to ſucceed: all that you have; but you will ſtand in need of patience: have you any? &c.

LETTER VIII.

To the marchioneſs de FONTENAILLES.

I Was juſt going to write you a ſcolding letter, when I received one from you full of wit and kindneſs. My wrath thus diſarmed, I am ready to embrace you. Yet a letter does not ſatisfy my heart. You know me to be nice in the choice of my company, and yourſelf to be one of the few I value and wiſh to ſee: why then deny me the pleaſure?

I find myſelf alone in a mob of lordlings, who hate me, and whom I

deſpiſe. As for moſt women, their converſation gives me the head-ake. Their vanity, their airs, their trifling, and their falſehood render them unſupportable: I do not tell it them, but I am never the happier.

Now do I know that kings may mourn like other men; for my part, I often mourn the ambition that dragged me hither, and the ambition that chains me here: pity my weakneſs. The king of Monomotapa is ſaid to have five hundred buffoons that everywhere attend him, in order to make him laugh. Lewis XV. has five hundred monkeys that daily beſet his levee; but they ſeldom make him laugh: he is little leſs ruful than myſelf. How I do pity thoſe gods of the earth, who are believed ſo happy! Friendſhip alone, rather than love, might ſolace them. But kings have no friends; there are few indeed

worthy to have any: they have only ſlaves and flatterers.

You, my dear friend, you do love me: I am not then wholely to be pitied. When ſhall you come hither? Fail not to bring mademoiſelle de Fontenailles: you will ſee, by the careſſes I ſhall ſhower upon her, what affection I bear to her mother. &c.

LETTER IX.

To the marſhal de BELLISLE. 1747.

I Condole both with you and with France on this unfortunate affair of Exiles. People here greatly blame the raſhneſs of the chevalier de Belliſle, and ſay that a wiſe general never got himſelf ſlain: thoſe who talk ſo are perhaps too wiſe themſelves. For my part, I blame no body, and ſtill leſs the dead. Your brother had poſſibly too much

fire, but at leaſt he will not be branded with cowardiſe. He fell in the bed of honor, and that is enough to comfort you.

It does not greatly become a woman to talk of thoſe matters. The general ambition of our ſex is to pleaſe the living, without much minding the dead; that of yours is to have its head broke: every one in his way. But for me, I delight to honor merit, and men that reſemble you.

All France is in mortal alarm about this ſudden irruption of the auſtrians and piedmonteſe into Provence. I, tho' a true french-woman, have not the ſmalleſt fear: are not you there?

While the world is by the ears, our miniſters are ſtill talking of peace. I have frequent conferences with thoſe wiſe-heads, who do not appear to me quite ſo admirable as I figured them to

myſelf before a nearer view. The art of a politician is to deceive and to ly properly for the good of the ſtate: an art one would think not very difficult. I will tell you a fooliſh fancy of mine. I ſometimes imagine that a fine woman diſplays more wit and profound policy at her toilet, than is to be found in all the cabinets of Europe: for the art of pleaſing is yet harder than that of deceiving. You will doubtleſs be of another opinion; but I ſhall not admit you as a judge, becauſe you are no longer young.

Do not fail, my dear marſhal, to drub heartily thoſe gentlemen who cut off the poor chevalier: this I wiſh for your own glory and the honor of the nation. Send us good tidings with all ſpeed: the king will reward you like a king, and I like a pretty woman: I ſhall deign you perhaps a kiſs of my hand.

Farewel, marſhal; remember your glorious retreat from Prague: I have announced victory: give me not the ly.

LETTER X.

To the marchioneſs of BLAGNI.

WILL not you come and ſee my pigeons and kiſs them? They are ſo pretty: their tender tender careſſes awake ſo pleaſing remembrances, and never fail to ſet girls a dreaming: for this reaſon I never ſhow them to Alexandrina. Madam de Monteſpan had ſix white mice, which ſhe yoked to a little filigram-coach, and which took the liberty to bite her fair hands. Our fine women have always dogs or cats. I like neither: I love nothing but my billers.

The king is out a hunting: I would not go with him, becauſe I was in the

dumps; which made him laugh. I tell him ſometimes, that he is like that monarch who was *a mighty hunter before the Lord.* But Nimrod was a wicked king, and Lewis XV. is a good one; which makes all the difference in the world.

While he goes a hunting, the queen goes a praying. She is a ſaint: worldly grandeur and vanity touch her no more. I wiſh I could ſay as much; for the world with all its pomp and pleaſures tires me ſometimes to death: but I wiſh it not enough. It ſeems as if we had two ſouls, one to approve good, the other to do evil.

However the queen, in ſpite of all her holineſs, has one great fault; which is, that ſhe hates me. She ſeems to forget on my ſcore the law which obliges queens like other folks to love their neighbor as themſelves. For my part,

I do not like that fault, thank god: I love that princeſs, and revere her becauſe ſhe is virtuous; would I had the courage to imitate her! I love you alſo affectionately, my fair friend, and you know it well. &c.

LETTER XI.

To marſhal SAXE. 1747.

ONE muſt ever admire you and love you. France was not accuſtomed to vanquiſh the engliſh: that glory was reſerved for you. A marſhal of France, a great man, and true patriot, who cares not by whom the king is ſerved, ſo he be ſerved, and who knows none of the meanneſſes of jealouſy, ſaid lately that you united in yourſelf the ſpirit of the great Condé, with the wiſdom of Turenne. I know not whether thoſe celebrated generals, who made Europe tremble in the late

reign, were as great as they are repreſented: but I do know that you are more uſeful. They made in unjuſt wars conqueſts, whence the nation reaped no ſolid advantage. They attacked, but you defend: which is at once more important and more honorable.

We are told, marſhal, that amid the toils and fatigues of war, you ſtill find time to make love. I am a woman, and do not blame you: love makes heroes, and teaches them wiſdom. Charles XII. of Sweden, is perhaps the only one who never loved; but he ſuffered for it, and died an unfortunate madman. The ancient germans pronounced *ſomewhat divine in a beautiful woman.* I am much of their mind, and opine that the greatneſs of God beams more glorious on a fine countenance, than in the brain of Newton.

We are about to rejoice for your new

victory; take five or ſix more towns to amuſe us the reſt of the campaign, and then come and ſee your friends.

The conferences of Breda continue: I know not in what they will end, or whether they will beſtow the peace, of which France ſtands in ſo great need. But our plenipotentiaries aſk too much, and the enemy's offer not enough. I am much afraid this pompous negociation will come to nothing: it has hitherto produced only compliments and bows. At this you are doubtleſs not ſorry; for you heroes make your glory and joy to conſiſt in the killing of men: whereas the king would be glad to make them happy: and therefore is he ever ready to give peace; but then it muſt be an honorable and a uſeful one.

Te Deum was ſung yeſterday in the king's chapel for the battle of Laufelt. But I do not love a ceremony, which

offers, methinks, an indignity to God; juſt as if one ſhould go to thank a good father that one has had the happineſs of murdering his children: were it not more juſt and more natural to beg his pardon?

How does the count of Frieſland? I hope he will reſemble his uncle. The king has thoughts of marrying and ſettling him in a manner worthy of you and of him. Farewel, my dear marſhal; I do not recommend to you to continue beating the enemy, but to take care of your health for the ſervice of your ſovereign, and the ſatisfaction of your friends. The loſs of a ſingle man is often a public calamity: and this France would find, had ſhe the misfortune of loſing you.

LETTER XII.

To count LOWENDAHL. 1747.

I Thank you for your letter and for your conqueſt. You have then taken Bergen-op-zoom, in ſpite of the devil and the dutch. That city which baffled the genius of Spinola, and bore the name of *maiden*, has not been able to hold out againſt you; which proves that the french are capable of any thing, when commanded by ſuch men. They have done nothing but taken towns during this whole war, as if taking ſo many airings: but the capture of this laſt gives a crown to their glory and yours. I am overjoyed that to you we have the obligation.

The allies give out in their gazettes, that your troops, entering the city, maſſacred without diſtinction men,

women and children. I know not whether ſo horrid a ly can recommend them to the good graces of the mobility; but I do know that the rational world will not believe it. Nor is it without juſtice that the french have the reputation of being the moſt humane people upon earth: they love victory, not blood.

Continue, dear count, to do honor to the country which you have adopted, and which is proud to adopt you. Should age and infirmities come to bereave us of the brave Maurice in the courſe of this too long war, you will remain to us, and prevent our perceiving that he is dead.

It is mortifying to France that her two greateſt captains ſhould be foreigners: a remark the king made on the taking of Bergen-op-zoom. He wondered the nation produced no more ſo great

men as in the former reign. The prince of Conti, who was preſent, replied loudly: *The reaſon is, our wives now-a-days are too fond of their footmen.* The cut was keen, but not perhaps unjuſt.

The counteſs of Lowendahl came yeſterday to court. The king received her as the conſort of a heroe, and ſaid to her: *Madam, every body will gain ſomething by this conqueſt of Bergen-op-zoom. Upon the count I beſtow the ſtaff of marſhal of France, and I hope to have the pleaſure of beſtowing peace upon my ſubjects.* I ſaw afterwards the lady in private, and my eſteem for her grew. With all the graces of her ſex, ſhe has the ſenſe and ſpirit of yours. I begged her friendſhip: mine is a debt, which I thankfully ſhall pay. I told her that if ever I could be any uſe to her, I hoped ſhe would judge me worthy of attempting it.

The king has juſt given a regiment to your ſon. Mr. d'Argenſon was againſt it on account of his youth; but I retorted upon him the ſaying of Corneille:

Where ſouls are born to ſoar in loftier ſpheres,
True valor waits not the advance of years.

I ſurely had reaſon: the merit of the father enſures that of the ſon. I wiſh you, my lord, only a good ſtate of health: in yourſelf you will find the reſt.

LETTER XIII.

To the counteſs of BRE'ZE'.

I Have juſt got rid of a tireſom woman, who has thrown me into vapors. There is ſcarce any other company at court, which is however titled the center of wit and good-breeding. With me, good-breeding conſiſts in being amiable; and whoever tires me,

is a ruſtic. I daily find that there is no company worſe than *good company.*

They ſay, my dear, that you are amuſing yourſelf with having your picture drawn. I am glad of it: it is a ſign you ſtill are handſom. Vanlo is an inimitable fellow for catching the likeneſs. Tell him not to forget thoſe two little dimples which render your ſmile ſo lovely, thoſe roſy lips which I take ſo much pleaſure in kiſſing, or thoſe tender and touching eyes which tell me ſo plainly, *I love you.*

A ſultan is ſaid one day to have ſent for a famous venetian painter to make a portrait of his favorite lady. The painter telling him that for that purpoſe he muſt ſee her, the jealous prince thought him highly impertinent and diſmiſſed him. Had you been in that ſeraglio, you never had ſeen your picture.

There is to be a maſked ball at the opera-houſe to-morrow: I have half a mind to go thither, and to take you up in paſſing. I ſhall dreſs like a marmoſet, and you as you pleaſe: but we ſhall make the men mad. Meantime, till the execution of this noble deſign, give me a kiſs, and I ſhall ſoon return it.

LETTER XIV.

To marſhal SAXE. 1747.

YOU ſend us always good news: every one of your letters announces a victory or a conqueſt, and you are the fondling of fortune. The letters of Ceſar were doubtleſs of like import: but Ceſar had his health when he conquered the world for himſelf, and you are ſick when you win battles for us. Confeſs then glory a cruel miſtreſs, who ſells her favors ſo dear. But now I talk

of Ceſar, Mr. de Briſſac, who had bee
at the late action, and was relating t
me the particulars, happened to ſay: I
ſupped with Saxe the night before th
battle. Here I ſtopt him ſhort, and
made him take notice that through re
ſpect for your rank and character, h
ought at leaſt to have ſaid, *Monſieur d
Saxe. Madam*, replied he briſkly, *does
one ſay, Mr. Ceſar, or Mr. Alexander!*
This gaſcoon ſally was a ſublime repar-
tee, and is virtually the higheſt enco-
mium.

You want, marſhal, but a litt
health to be the happieſt man upo
earth, ſince you are the greateſt: heroe
ſhould never ail any thing.

The dutch murmur ſadly, and do no
like you at all in their neighborhood:
they remember the invaſion of Lewi
XIV. They fear the ſame fate under
his ſucceſſor, though they be only aux-

liaries. But, after all, it is in their power to divert the ſtorm that threatens them, and which they ſo much dread. All required of them is to ſtand neuter in a war which does not concern them; and I am amazed that thoſe merchants, who ſo well underſtand their own intereſt on other occaſions, ſhould not take on this the wiſeſt and ſafeſt courſe. They ſeem to have forgot the leſſon of their famous John de Wit, who counſelled them never to make an offenſive alliance, but rather *to imitate the prudent cat, who takes mice for none but herſelf.*

Moreover, the engliſh faction is all-powerful with them, through the influence of the houſe of Orange. The patriots are well aware to what calamities their country is likely to be expoſed: but they ſuppreſs their murmurs, as they have no power. Their miniſter Van Hoy is preſenting memorials upon

memorials; he proteſts that their high mightineſſes are full of reſpect for the king, and wiſh nothing more ardently than to live in good underſtanding with us. On our part, the miniſters proteſt to him that the french nation has the greateſt reſpect for the illuſtrious dutch nation, and wiſhes cordially that the latter may become wiſe and reaſonable. We hope ſhe will, when ſhe ſees us at her gates, and your victories procure us a peace, which heroes do not love, but of which all Europe has need. The french are ſtarving in the midſt of acclamations and bonfires; nor can they ſave themſelves while they are ſhouting, *God ſave the king*. I ſalute you, &c.

LETTER XV.

To the dutcheſs of DURAS.

DO you know, madam, that we are about to have a new dauphineſs? and whom, but the princeſs of Saxony?

A certain duke is to be ſent, who loves brilliant exploits, to make the demand in form. You know the duke: he has a fine head, but nothing in it. However, to hint it by the by, this marriage will be ſomewhat ſingular: the dauphin will get for conſort, the daughter of him who dethroned his grandfather, and who wears at this moment his crown. But the conduct of princes is like that of the gods, very different from the manner of men. Did not the duke of Savoy, at the beginning of this century, exert himſelf to dethrone Philip V. of Spain, his ſon-in-law, and prefer the vain title of king, which he got by that means, to the ſacred name of father?

After all, I am glad they are giving a wife to the dauphin; for I fear bigotry will turn his head. Marriage is the grand ſpecific againſt that diſtemper

of feeble ſouls. The young prince is good-natured like his father, nor does he want for ſenſe: but his education has been greatly neglected. It was once propoſed to the cardinal de Fleuri to give him for preceptor the abbé Rome, a good ſcholar, and an honeſt man. His eminence made anſwer, that the abbé had too much wit; and ſo committed the heir of the firſt throne in Europe to the care of a fool and a bigot, who reared him like a monk, and took more pains to make what is called a ſaint of him than a great prince. The cardinal, though upwards of ſeventy, hoped doubtleſs to govern the ſon after the father.

If you ſee the fair counteſs, I beſeech you to embrace her for me, and put her in mind of her promiſe: my friends muſt have memory. As for mine, it is tolerable: I never ſhall forget to love

you tenderly; a ſentiment, which conſtitutes one of the greateſt pleaſures of my life. &c.

LETTER XVI.

*To mr. d'*ARGENSON. 1747.

I Am very ſorry, not for you, who have reſolution; but for the ſtate, in what is termed your diſgrace. The king loſes a good ſervant, and you become your own maſter: it is not you who are to be pitied. Here is a certain faction of fops, ſworn enemies to the merit and parts they are incapable of poſſeſſing; and I find they have too much power. They are like the dog in the manger, who could neither eat the hay, nor ſuffer that the horſe ſhould: deſtitute as they are of capacity for the king's ſervice, they will not have others to ſerve him. *Quella rabia della geloſia!*

You are yourſelf, ſir, an evidence that good qualities often incur more odium than bad ones. They ſay you ſupport your exile with more conſtancy and patience than a ſtoic: this ſurpriſes not me; for I know you. I would give you an oſtrich for device, with this motto: *There is nothing too hard for the digeſtion of the ſtrong.*

Meantime all the worthy hope ſpeedily to ſee you at the head of the department, to which you have done ſo much honor: it is not only good fortune that is inconſtant; bad is ſo too. Though the king be prejudiced, yet he is good and juſt: he will quickly feel the want of you. If I can contribute to your recall, I ſhall eſteem myſelf happy in the very attempt of reſtoring to the king the greateſt miniſter of the age, and of evincing to you that I am not ungrateful. &c.

LETTER XVII.

To mademoiſelle ALEXANDRINA. 1747.

HOW do you do, my pretty angel? Everybody ſays you will do honor to your mother, and my heart aſſures me of it. Your ladies are highly pleaſed with you: they are conſtantly extolling your capacity and behavior. Continue to deſerve their affection and their cares, if you deſire to pleaſe me and to make yourſelf one day valued. Come and ſee me next friday with your little friend, mademoiſelle Roſieres. The king loves you as his daughter, and will make much of you: he talks to me often about you. Nor do I at all doubt, but, when you ſhall be ready for a ſettlement, he will do ſomething conſiderable in your favor. Farewel, my dear child; take care of your health, and love your mother as much as ſhe loves you.

LETTER XVIII.

To the counteſs of NOAILLES. 1747.

WHAT were you doing yeſterday with that great looby the marquis? I hate him becauſe he is a tireſom fool. He can neither laugh nor ſpeak like a gentleman: nor do I ever ſee him but I catch a ſufficient headake. He has one of thoſe idiot-faces, which the italians call *volto ſenza ſenno*. Yet is he ſaid to be goodnatured, generous, and ever ready to ſerve his friends and the unfortunate. I have my own difficulty to believe this: for one muſt have ſome parts to do good; fools are incapable of it. In a word, my lady-counteſs, by your good leave, the man is not one of thoſe whom I love to ſee.

Gueſs what I have been doing to-day. I got up at ſix in the morning, and went

a wailing into the park among the nightingales, who paid no attention to my moan. I am diſpirited for many reaſons, and begin to perceive that I have committed a piece of folly in coming to court. The pomp, the grandeur, the pleaſures of this enchanted land enchant me no more: the charm is over, and I find no longer any thing in my heart but an immenſe void which nothing can fill. The world is a liar: it promiſes a happineſs which it is unable to beſtow. Sometimes I ſeem to think otherwiſe, and am pretty chearful: we are mere machines of providence. One would be apt to pronounce in the human heart two meaſures, one of pleaſure, the other of pain, which alternately empty and fill.

The moſt chriſtian king is like me, mournful and merry by turns. When melancholy predominates with him, I

have recourſe to ſome little airs, of which he is particularly fond: we ſing and appear content. The divine Jeliot is always the ſoul of thoſe petty concerts: he conſtitutes for a moment our delight, as he did that of Paris. He never fails to bring back ſerenity into the royal mind, and ſo proves often the prime movement of the affairs of Europe: for a monarch, who refuſes every thing in his dejection, grants every thing when the vapor is diſpelled.

As for you, my dear counteſs, you are perhaps more equal and more happy. But be aſſured that in low or high ſpirits, I love you always with the ſame tenderneſs. The count will have the command in Alſace: deſire him to love me too, and to give over ſcolding me.

LETTER XIX.

To the marquis of LUSSAC.

THE king has juſt granted a regiment to your ſon, in conſideration of your former ſervices and of his own merit. Come together and thank the gracious prince, and pay a viſit to your friends. I am thinking alſo of mademoiſelle de Luſſac: but ſhe is yet too young to have an abbey. Women, and particularly nuns, are harder to govern than men; and thoſe humble *ſpouſes of Jeſus Chriſt*, can reſpect no abbeſs without wrinkles. However, your daughter ſhall not ſtay till that time. Her virtue and her wiſdom muſt ſupply age: beſides, ſhe will grow old but too ſoon.

I ſalute your lordſhip, and ſhall always make it my pride and my pleaſure to ſerve you.

LETTER XX.

To the marchioneſs of CHATELET.

IT is I, madam, who ought rather to thank you for affording me an opportunity of ſerving you in the perſon of the young count. My value for you and him rendered it a duty, which I have endeavored to diſcharge.

Allow me at the ſame time to compliment my ſex upon your honoring it with talents, of which the men muſt be jealous. When Newton aſtoniſhed Europe by his ſublime diſcoveries, he little imagined that a frenchwoman, celebrated alike for rank and beauty, ſhould be capable not only of underſtanding but of expounding him: a proof that intellect has no ſex. While the ingenious Voltaire ſings you, and France admires you, permit that a wo-

an who knows nothing, but is full of teem for knowlege, preſent to the luſtrious and charming *Emilia* the ſin-ere homage which all Europe will ſpee-ily pay her. &c.

LETTER XXI.

To the duke of BOUFLERS. 1747.

YOUR grace has not diſappointed my hopes. I have juſt received our letter, with an account of the rai-ng the ſiege of Genoa. I poſted irectly to the king, who has promiſed o reward you. You greatly extol the enoeſe; and ſay they backed you with ll their power. I do not in the leaſt wonder at that: every man is more con-erned than his neighbor, to defend his wn habitation.

I admire with you the conduct of the governor of Savona, who refuſed to

obey the ſenate and give up the place, in order to be true to his country. This action would have been worthy a roman; and yet it was an italian, nay a genoeſe, that performed it.

You do well to think of fortifying the ſtate of Genoa againſt any new attempt on the part of the auſtrians, and of blocking up the entrance of it. However, in ſpite of all your cares, and the king's good intentions, it will be difficult to ſecure the tranquillity of Italy. Never has it proved practicable, becauſe it is at once the fineſt and feebleſt country in Europe. It has ever excited the ambition of the mighty powers; and though theſe ſhould be inclinable to prevent war there, the italians would themſelves oppoſe ſuch prevention. As they are poor, they ſtand in need of foreign armies, who come among them to cut each others

throats, and to enrich them. And therefore have they always opened to our troops, the entrance of that terreſtrial paradiſe which is inhabited by demons, and call'ed, with ſo much juſtice, *the grave of the french.*

The ſenate has done barely its duty in creating you a noble genoeſe. It is indeed a ſlender honor; but the glory you have acquired, and the eſteem of the king, are of higher value.

If the Infant come over to Genoa, will you pleaſe to preſent him with my moſt humble reſpects. Now is he ſure of a ſettlement, and highly is he worthy of one. Receive, my lord-duke, my beſt wiſhes and compliments; no one honors you more than &c.

LETTER XXII.

To the counteſs of BRE'ZE'.

I Thank you much for your letter and your monkeys. That Raux is an admirable fellow: his enamelled figures are coming into faſhion, like the panteens; but they will not be ſo ridiculous.

The poor marchioneſs of Pouange is lately dead, almoſt ſuddenly: this will make many a beauty tremble, who now enjoys good health. Two days before, ſhe was at the ball: the moment ſhe got home, ſhe took her bed, and fell into a dream. She there ſaw her mother in the diſmal attire of the dead, like a great white fantom, beckoning her to follow her. She ſtarted up terrified, called her attendants, and related to them the viſion, which they treated as a chimera: but ſhe was ſtruck. She now

had one feveriſh fit, then another, then a third with delirium; and ſo yielded up her lovely ſoul to God, who has, I hope, received it graciouſly: for ſhe was wiſe and virtuous. The marquis, who adored her, is inconſolable. I pity not the dead, but the ſurvivors, who have tender hearts.

I read over your letter with that ſweet ſatisfaction, which attends the correſpondence of true friends. But I bluſh at the compliments you pay me. Eſteem me, if you think me any way worthy; but tell it not me: for that is idle.

I depend on ſeing you in my box next ſaturday at the play. *Zara* is to be performed, which is a maſterpiece. It peculiarly ſuits us, being the peculiar of feeling ſouls. Farewel, *cor mio*; preſerve your health, and let me embrace you.

LETTER XXIII.

To marſhal BELLISLE. 1747.

GENERAL Brown has then been forced to repaſs the Var, and we are obliged to you for it, as well as to Don Philip, who on that occaſion, you ſay, expoſed his perſon like a private volunteer. I do not wonder at it: he is of the blood of Bourbon. And ſo the king of Sardinia's fine project of invading Provence, has vaniſhed into ſmoke. The french are invincible, when commanded by men like you, and particularly when attacked at home: this Charles the fifth found long before the ſavoyard. You have avenged the death of your brother: this victory will make the king forget the unfortunate affair of Exiles.

France is now triumphant in every

part of Europe, into which the war has been carried. But alas! at ſea the engliſh have totally deſtroyed the wretched remains of our marine. I am much afraid that ſo much blood and treaſure laviſhed in this war, ſo ridiculous in its motives, and ſo cruel in its effects, will produce no advantage in the end; and that the king will be obliged to give up the conqueſts in Europe, in order to get back the colonies. Every time that the engliſh beat us on what they call their own element, I am in ſome ſort ready to curſe the memory of cardinal Fleuri. I beg however God's pardon: for he was a prieſt. His timid policy, and ridiculous economy, have made France loſe every remnant of conſideration in quality of maritime power. He loved neither war nor expence. He had that ſpirit of parſimony, which is very good in the

management of a private family, but which is often very pernicious in the management of the great family of the ſtate, where one muſt know how to ſpend, and even how to loſe upon occaſion. They ſay the engliſh had a great value for him: I believe them. He let our ſhips rot in our ports for fear of provoking them: it was a ſure way of pleaſing thoſe honeſt iſlanders. The adminiſtration of prieſts has ever been fatal to France, and perhaps to other ſtates. They are made for praying to God, and not for governing men: are not you of my opinion?

Enjoy your health, marſhal, and be content. Everybody honors you, and I more than anybody. Had the unfortunate Fouquet been told that his great grandſon ſhould be not only a great lord, but a great man, he would perhaps have more patiently ſupported

his confinement. I ſincerely ſalute you, and wiſh my country many ſuch men.

LETTER XXIV.

To the chevalier de SADE. 1747.

I Inſtantly carried to the king the good news you ſent me, and for which I ſend you my thanks. He did not at firſt expect that ſuch a place as Antibes, unfortified, and defended but by a handful of men, could hold out four and twenty hours, againſt a numerous army. Yet have you ſtood a ſiege of forty days, and at laſt compelled the enemy to raiſe it. If this is not the moſt important action of the war, it is not the leaſt admirable. The king will with all ſpeed give you tokens of his eſteem; and were he capable of forgetting it, I ſhould promiſe you to put him in mind. For my part, chevalier, I ſhall

always make it my duty to ſerve merit and valor; and ſo you may judge of my ſentiments towards you.

LETTER XXV.

To the count of MAUREPAS. 1747.

I Eagerly opened your letter, hoping the news of a victory; and it proved that of a defeat. This unhappy affair finiſhes the remnant of the french marine, and baffles all our hopes. There is however ſome ground of conſolation: Mr. de la Jonquiere fought like a man of ſpirit: but alas! he had to do with engliſhmen. It may be ſaid that every thing is loſt, ſave honor. I do not believe that theſe continual ſucceſſes of the enemy have any example in hiſtory: to the enemy alone it is that fortune is not inconſtant. There are at this day but two great nations in Europe: one

ſeems deſtined to poſſeſs the empire of the ſea, the other that of the land: we muſt take patience.

I foreſee that France will be obliged to make a ſhameful peace, and to give up the conqueſts in Flanders. The diſtreſs of the kingdom, the difficulty of making new levies, and the obſtinacy of the allies, who have both more money and more patience, will render it quickly neceſſary. Marſhal Saxe boaſts of conquering Holland next campaign, and of planting flowerdeluces on the ramparts of Amſterdam. To tell you the truth, I do not believe a word of it, and even I do not deſire it. That conqueſt, ſuppoſing it poſſible, would be highly hazardous. Lewis XIV, who made it, was almoſt as ſoon obliged to abandon it. He reaped from it no other advantage than the vain honor of cauſing maſs to be publicly ſaid at Utrecht:

a good leſſon to his ſucceſſor. I am in the firm perſwaſion that the reign of Lewis XV. will never be that of conqueſts. The french of the preſent age are very different from thoſe of the laſt. I ſay again, peace is indiſpenſable to us. Our marine is deſtroyed; we are drained of men and money; and we have powerful enemies. Do you, ſir, who hold the firſt place in council, and who by every light of experience ſo well deſerve it, do your beſt to reſtore to the french that peace they ſo much need, and which is the moſt precious bleſſing a good king can beſtow upon his loving ſubjects. &c.

LETTER XXVI.

To the marchioneſs of SAUSSAY.

I Have been happy theſe eight days, that is, all the time I have been in-

dulged with your company? now I am wretched as uſual. Nay, I can tell you, to the ſcandal of the great ones of the earth, that, notwithſtanding my favor and the eſteem of a potentate, I am ſometimes on the point of forſaking the court, and ſeeking ſolace in retreat with my friends. But my weakneſs withholds me: I hate the world, and cannot quit it.

How do you like the new dauphineſs? She is not handſom; but ſhe has ſenſe, grace, and that certain ſomewhat which pleaſes more than beauty. Her illuſtrious conſort is a devotee: we ſhall ſee whether ſhe will not cure him of that diſtemper of little ſouls, which never fails to make a prince a perſecutor, and his ſubjects ſlaves. I know no great king that ever was a bigot: the good Henry IV. was not one. Let us love God and virtue, and bigotry leave to monks.

The dauphineſs has brought with her a german jeſuit, ycleped father Crouſt, who is her confeſſor: the greateſt fool perhaps, and dulleſt animal ever imported from the holy german empire. Yet has ſhe an extreme confidence in him; which makes me apprehend everything.

But, on the ſubject of the dauphin: I never perhaps exhibited to you a ſcene, which paſt not long ſince at Verſailles. A woman of Paris, with child, took a longing to embrace that young prince, who is indeed beauteous as love. An officer took upon him to introduce her: but the dauphin, ſeing her breaſt uncovered, turned his back upon her, and himſelf threw the door in her face. You ſee that bigotry has almoſt made him a brute.

I was yeſterday ſurpriſed to ſee the young dauphineſs with bracelets of the

deceaſed infanta, and even her miniature among them. The dauphin deſired her to wear what ſurely gives her no great pleaſure. A gallant conduct truly!

It rains inceſſant, and I cannot get out to take the air. I am reduced therefore to keep my apartment, and to careſs my pigeons. But wherever I am, or however occupied, I ceaſe not to think of you, my fair counteſs. Farewel.

LETTER XXVII.

To the ſame. 1747.

HAVE you read the cataſtrophe of the tyrant of Perſia, the too famous Thamas Kouli-kan? He was maſſacred in his palace by his guards. That man, ſo noted for his courage and for his crimes, has ſhared the fate he deſerved: a fine leſſon for the ambitious.

Three travellers found one day a trea-

ſure. One appointed caterer poiſoned the proviſions, in order to get rid of his companions, and become ſole heir to the treaſure. Theſe at the ſame time took the reſolution of aſſaſſinating him through the ſame motive; a reſolution which they executed upon his return, and then fell a devouring what he had brought. They there found the death they fairly earned: true emblem of the conſequences of ambition. *Vanity of vanities!* human grandeur, pompous chimera! how ſincerely do I deſpiſe thee! but alas! I have not yet the courage to hate thee.

We are ſtill dreaming of peace. The king makes highly-reaſonable overtures: but the engliſh laugh at them, and will treat with us as with the vanquiſhed. The conferences of Breda have hitherto produced only a number of fine ſpeeches and compliments: yet we live in hopes.

When you write to the lovely marquis, tell him not to expoſe himſelf ſo raviſhly, for your ſake and that of his friends: guns have no reſpect of perſons. Farewel: I am ſetting out for Marli: it is a charming place; but your preſence would render it more ſo. &c.

LETTER XXVIII.

To mr. d'ARGENSON. 1747.

THE engliſh have then renewed their treaty with the ruſſian ſavages, by which the latter engage to furniſh them with thirty thouſand men for their pay: they are like the german princes, any-body's friends for pay. I know not, however, what the allies will make of thoſe barbarians. The king of Pruſſia will not let them paſs with impunity, and I dare ſay that, if ever they come into Flanders, they muſt

arrive by ſea in engliſh bottoms, which is hardly practicable; or make the trip on a milſtone, like their great Saint Nicolas.

Meantime, I look upon thoſe alliances with the ruſſians as of a very dangerous tendency. That nation, which a hundred years ago was no more known in the reſt of Europe than the land round the ſouthern pole, will gradually train to military diſcipline, in the ſervice of the powers that employ her. She will ſoon be a match for her maſters, and prove formidable to them. Nor were it impoſſible to ſee a new deluge of barbarians, iſſuing from the caverns of Siberia, and commanded by a new Attila, who ſhould overwhelm Europe. From ſuch a deluge God preſerve us!

I do not love politics: but ſince the ſingularity of my fortune renders the ſtudy neceſſary for me, I beg you may

continue to be my guide. After all, I imagine the only two requiſites, integrity and underſtanding. As for that policy which empowers to deceive men, and render them unhappy, I have no occaſion for it, nor you capacity to teach it me.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXIX.

To the counteſs of NOAILLES. 1748.

HOW do you paſs your time, my dear friend? Are you happy and content? For my part, I am miſerable, and ſure that if there be any happineſs on earth, it is not in courts we muſt look for it. One would think this the cave of Trophonius, where honeſt laughter never chears. I find only falſe joys, falſe pleaſures, and falſe friends, who would ſtifle while they embrace

me. I do all I can to divert my melancholy: but pleaſure is a gift of God, which he never vouchſafes to ambition. It is no more poſſible for me to be merry, than for my lady Percival to be a beauty and a wit.

I thank you for your cantataes; the muſic and the words are alike beautiful; but at preſent I am not in a jovial humor.

Have you been at Martin's to ſee my new coach, as you threatened? I warned him not to ſpoil it by laſcivious pictures, which the decent cannot eye without a bluſh. It is however the reigning faſhion; but I ſcorn the faſhion: the rational will value me the more. The king has made me a preſent of ſix beautiful barbs: kind prince! how worthy to be loved!

But pray, is it true that the princeſs of Conti, being t'other day at maſs in

the Theatines', a poor blind man came to aſk alms of her, bewailing *that he had loſt the joys of this world*; upon which ſhe turned to the count of Clermont, and ſaid: *Can the fellow be a eunuch?* A pretty briſk reflexion, eſpecially in a church!

I yeſterday received the viſit of the fair dutcheſs, who ſaluted me on your part, and I embraced her for her trouble. You have not then forgot me? nor ought: it will be eight and twenty years next ſunday ſince there came into the world a certain perſon deſtined to love you eternally.

I beg my beſt affection to madam de Nanteuil, and am after all very happy to have friends like you. &c.

LETTER XXX.

To the count d' ARGENSON.

A Memorial has been preſented to me for the eſtabliſhment of a military ſchool, and I forward it to you, as a matter of your department. It is not, as cardinal Dubois ſaid of the projects of the abbé de S. Pierre, *a patriot-dream*: but to me it appears an inſtitution equally practicable and uſeful. The provinces are full of poor gentlemen, who live in the moſt abject diſtreſs: they might be greatly relieved by having their children educated for the ſervice of their king and country. The french nobility is (perhaps) the braveſt in Europe, and all ages have confeſſed what it could perform. But our poor hobbies, who have nothing but their ſword and their ſpirit, are loſt to

the ſtate, becauſe, not having the means of ſerving as officers, they diſdain to ſerve as ſoldiers. I think therefore that the ſcheme of making them uſeful in their children, merits ſome attention. Were there ſteadily kept up a body of five or ſix thouſand young men carefully educated by the ableſt maſters in all parts of the military art, this would form a nurſery of good officers, in whom ſkill would ſupply experience, and far ſuperior to thoſe powdered monkeys who preſent themſelves daily at your office, with no other claim to a lieutenancy than a little money and a load of preſumption.

I have not yet ſpoke to the king of this plan, which appears to me replete with wiſdom and importance: I would firſt have your opinion. Conſider, ſir, that we are at war with the engliſh, and that we ſhall almoſt always be ſo through

the rivalry and antipathy of the two nations. They are the only enemies that France has to fear, and againſt whom ſhe cannot too effectually prepare herſelf. We make war with other nations for glory, but with the engliſh for our exiſtence. We cannot therefore take too many precautions againſt ſuch rivals, who will at all events hold the balance of Europe, and who by their valor and riches are far more formidable than ever was the houſe of Auſtria.

I beg of you to remember the little Saint-Mark, of whom you had already a hint. If you examine him, you will find him worthy of ſerving the king, and will grant the employment he ſollicits rather to his merit than to my recommendation.

I am, &c.

LETTER XXXI.

To mr. de CHEVERT, *lieutenant-general.*

I Have obtained for you, ſir, that little government you deſired, and the preference has excited many murmurs among your rivals; which would have given me the higher opinion of you, though marſhal Saxe had not beſides often mentioned you as one of the beſt officers in the army. It was objected that you were a ſoldier of fortune, a man of no birth. That is preciſely what makes you more valuable: your merit is perſonal, that of others is foreign to them. I ſhall ever deem it my duty to ſerve you, and all like you; and ſo will it be ſeen that a woman accuſed with ſuch rancor and injuſtice, knows how to honour merit and virtue. Come and thank the king before you ſet out. I

ſhall alſo ſee you with pleaſure; but upon condition that you thank not me at all. I am, &c.

LETTER XXXII.

To the count d' ARGENSON. 1748.

THIS new ſtep of the king of Pruſſia gives me pleaſure, but does not ſurpriſe me. He underſtands his own intereſt as well as the art of war: let us alſo endeavor to underſtand ours. I foretold that the ſwediſh negotiation would come to nothing, and my prediction has been accompliſhed: the ſwedes have loſt their glory in gaining their liberty. They were the terrors of the north, while the ſlaves of their kings. Now that they are free, they are no longer any thing: which ſeems to prove, that liberty is, ſo to ſay, a pecu-

liar food which agrees not with every ſtomach. No more does it agree with us: the french require a maſter, and are happy in having a good one.

I have juſt received a petition from a commiſſary, and remit it to you, thoſe affairs moving in your ſphere. He complains that marſhal Saxe is too ſevere, becauſe, doubtleſs, he does not permit thoſe honeſt folks to rob at diſcretion. Anſwer the little gentleman as he deſerves. I admire the aſſurance of thoſe greedy fellows, who preſume to trouble the government with their petty intereſts. When the king ſends a ſhip to China, does he mind whether the mice be at their eaſe?

Here is a youth of good family, who has been recommended to me. I paſs by his pleaſing figure, to mention only the main point, that he is a brave fellow and fit for real ſervice. I ſhould be

glad you did ſomething for him, and I deſire you may.

LETTER XXXIII.

To mademoiſelle ALEXANDRINA. 1748.

I Have received a letter about you, that grieves me. They ſay you are haughty and imperious with your companions, and that you begin to grow untractable. Why do you afflict your mother's heart? Why drive her to the ſad neceſſity of chiding you? Had I not earneſtly recommended to you to be mild, modeſt, and affable, as the only means of pleaſing God and men? Have you ſo ſoon forgot my injunctions? Have you a mind to make me bluſh for you? I hope you will mend your manners for my ſake as well as your own. So no more lofty airs: they become no one, and ſtill leſs you than

another. If I have you bred like a princeſs, forget not how far you are from being one. The ſame fortune which raiſed me may change, and render me the moſt wretched of women; in which caſe you would be, like me, a mere nothing.

Farewel, my dear child, you know that I breath only for you, and that for you alone I love life. If you promiſe me to amend, I pardon and embrace you. &c.

LETTER XXXIV.

To the lady-abbeſs of ST. ANTONY. 1748.

I Reſpectfully received your moſt ſerene highneſſes letter, and I wiſh I could ſolace or ſerve you. But I can do nothing in the affair, which has been repreſented to the king in the moſt odious light. You are accuſed of playing the tyrant to your nuns. You are

ſaid to bathe every morning in a tub full of milk, which you make them drink when you have done. This were unworthy a princeſs of the blood of Bourbon, and I do not believe it. But unfortunately it is believed here, and the king is highly provoked. It has therefore been reſolved to take from you the government of your young ladies. However, your revenue is preſerved to you; ſo that, to take the matter rightly, I ſhould rather be tempted to compliment than to pity you. The charge of a hundred and fifty girls, ever peeviſh and diſcontented, is exceeding troubleſome, eſpecially to a perſon of your rank. I moſt humbly thank you for the confidence you have been pleaſed to repoſe in me: I have endeavored to approve myſelf worthy of it. If I have not been able to ward off the coming ſtorm, I have at leaſt been happy

enough to mitigate its effects, as you will quickly learn. My profound reſpect for you and for the illuſtrious blood whence you ſpring, conſtituted this a duty which I have zealouſly labored to fulfil. I am, &c.

LETTER XXXV.

To the marchioneſs of SAUSSAI. 1748.

WHAT have you done to madam de Fronlai? She complains loudly of you. Should friends fall out? She has not told me the particulars of your quarrel: but I take upon me to make it all up, provided you have not called her *ugly*, which never is forgiven among women.

The king ſets out to-morrow for Compiegne, and I am to follow him. But I carry everywhere the ſame melan-

choly: it is eaſier to change ones air than ones humor. Who was that impertinent that called out, upon ſeing me walk along with marſhal Saxe: *Behold the king's ſword and his ſcabbard?* This wretched pleaſantry has run through all Paris, and ſo muſt have reached you with the reſt. I wiſh I knew the author, not in order to puniſh him, for ſuch nonſenſe offends not me; but to beg of him to mingle more wit and decency in his jokes.

I entreat you in my abſence to go and ſee the pictures of mr. de Renuſſon, and to purchaſe for me what you pleaſe: I refer it entirely to your taſte. But there is particularly one piece which I ſhould be glad to have; and that is the rape of Proſerpine: let it not eſcape. Such is my firſt commiſſion: the ſecond, with which I charge you ſtill more expreſsly, is to take care of your health, and to

love me always. Farewel, my dear: I wiſh and hope to ſee you at Compiegne: that day will be moſt pleaſing to me. &c.

LETTER XXXVI.

To the dutcheſs of DURAS. 1748.

YOU aſk me what I am doing, my lady-dutcheſs. I am languiſhing, and loving you always in the old way. I once imagined fooliſhly the court to be the abode of ſmiles and joys: it is rather that of tears, at leaſt to me. I ſhed ſome to-day of indignation, at ſeing my friends, thoſe whom I have ſerved with my utmoſt power, join hand in hand againſt me. This ſhall not, however, hinder me from doing good, purſuant to the ſaying of a philoſopher: *Give the dogs to eat, though they ſhould bite thy fingers.*

I repent, however, of having contributed to the riſe of a certain per-

ſonage, who is equally incapable of ſerving the king and of feeling gratitude: but then I did not know him.

You have doubtleſs heard of one Chamillard, whom Lewis XIV. made ſecretary at war, becauſe he played well at billiards. I have done pretty nearly the ſame thing for that fellow: he had no other merit than that of an entertaining manner, and is actually ſecretary of ſtate.

There is, according to my way of thinking, one great abuſe in all governments: every member of adminiſtration ought to be fixed in his poſt, without hope of riſing: neither juſtice elſe nor application can be expected from him. He cannot diſcharge the duties of the office to which he has the ambition to aſpire, becauſe he has not yet attained it; nor thoſe of that which he occupies, becauſe he has a deſign to quit it. The man in queſtion confirms my remark.

The dutcheſs of Parma is expected here; and I hope her preſence will bring back gaiety into this court, where no one laughs but from the teeth outward. The king ſaid to me yeſterday: *I have many a flatterer, and not a friend.* Such is the misfortune of princes: they are adored, but ſeldom beloved.

The young count came and thanked me for the regiment he has obtained. It is true I dropt a hint in his favor; but his own merit ſaid much more. He talks of great actions like a man who is capable of performing them.

I ſhall ſee you perhaps next week at the ſweet counteſſes, who has invited me to a little feaſt. It will be the feaſt of friendſhip, and conſequently full of delight. Farewel, my dear dutcheſs: I kiſs your fair hands.

LETTER XXXVII.

To the marchioneſs of FONTENAILLES.

1748.

THE court is a good clime for forgetting the unfortunate: there is no more talk of the poor pretender, nor does a ſoul perhaps pity him beſide myſelf. They ſay he is going to take a trip into Germany, that land of pride and poverty, where he will find at every ſtep princes and beggars. He has a grand project in his head. I wiſh he may ſucceed, but without expecting it: the unfortunate have no friends. The king has ordered him bills of exchange for ſix hundred thouſand livres. I wiſh with all my heart that may help to comfort him, if, however, a little money can comfort for the loſs of a throne.

At length the little marquis has obtained his wiſh. He was ſupple and

fawning, like a ſpaniel, complimenting thoſe who laughed at him, and thanking thoſe who abuſed him. The true way of ſucceeding at court!

When I conſider the meanneſſes, the impertinence, and the cringing ſoul of moſt courtiers, I make a great difference between great men and great lords. Theſe, whom I deſpiſe, tire me to death: the others do not tire me; but they are rare, and I ſee few of them. I pity kings for being ſurrounded with thoſe gilded monkeys, as daſtardly and miſchievous as thoſe of Angola. Courts, which the fooliſh vulgar regard with ſo much envy, ought to excite nothing but compaſſion. T'other day the abbé de la Tour-dupin, preacher to the pretty girls, came to ſee us at Verſailles, and, on being aſked what had brought him thither; *I have*, ſaid he, *a deſcription of paradiſe to make, and I come hither to take notes.*

Poor man! if the exceſſes of the moſt fatal and meaneſt paſſions, envy, hatred, rage, deſpair; if the furies and the crimes of ambition can give an image of paradiſe, he may come hither at any time.

As I intereſt myſelf in whatever concerns you, I give you joy on the affair of Boulogne. The parliament was unanimouſly for you; which proves that juſtice is not blind: nor am I, in the ſentiments of eſteem and affection I ſhall ever entertain towards you.

LETTER XXXVIII.

To the counteſs of BREZE'. 1748.

I Have always had abundance of enemies: ſome I actually have among the devotees, and they are the worſt of any. A holy man of that ſtamp, who has the look and perhaps the heart of a

demon, poſted himſelf yeſterday in the paſſage as the king was returning from maſs; threw himſelf at his feet, and preſented a petition, which the monarch received with his uſual goodneſs, and then came to read it in my apartment. It concluded thus: *I denounce to your majeſty, in the name of God, that madam de Pompadour muſt abſolutely be diſmiſſed as ſoon as poſſible: otherwiſe his avenging hand will ſuddenly ſtretch itſelf forth over your kingdom, and puniſh your ſubjects for the weakneſs of their ſovereign.* This inſolence deſerved perhaps death, or at leaſt perpetual impriſonment. But the beſt of princes acted like himſelf upon the occaſion. He ordered the meſſenger from heaven to be called, and contented himſelf with ſaying to him: *Friend, go get yourſelf blooded, and recover your brains; for I denounce to you in the name of good-ſenſe, that you are mad.*

For my part, I do not believe him mad, but a dangerous hypocrite, ſent, not from God, but from certain perſons whom I deſpiſe and do not fear. Such was my adventure, madam: what ſay you to it?

Do you know that I have bought the hotel d'Evreux? For I muſt have a houſe in Paris. But I am going to pull it down, and to build another more to my mind. The folly of building is everywhere laughed at: I again approve vaſtly that ſame folly, which gives bread to ſo many wretches. My delight is not to contemplate gold, but to diffuſe it. I am ſure you think with me. Let us love each other always, and ſcorn the baſeneſs of envy. I am, &c.

LETTER XXXIX.

To the ſame. 1748.

I Do not at all like your *Governeſs* of honeſt Lachauſſée, becauſe that comedy is no comedy, making us cry inſtead of making us laugh. This falſe *weeping* kind is ridiculous, and ſhocks probability. However, it comes into faſhion, becauſe it is eaſier to ſwell into the ſentiments of tragedy than to joke with grace. The comic genius died with Moliere.

Another fault of the french theatre is, that it exhibits only perſons of high life, as if all men were marquiſſes. An author would think himſelf degraded, if he brought upon the ſtage citizens and merchants. The engliſh bring cobblers upon it, and there I much approve them. Comedy is the picture of men, and a cobler is a man like another.

A third defect is, that our comic writers attack only the ridiculous: vice were their fitter object. A ridiculous character does no harm, and makes us laugh: but a vicious is a *sword* and a *maul*.

Yet I will go and see the piece, because I promised it; and shall take you up in passing. We shall afterwards return hither, if you please; where we shall make what the old french of Lewis XIV. called a *midnight*. Farewel, my dear; I love always equally your good heart and head.

LETTER XL.

To the dutchess d' ETRÉES.

WHY do not you come and see me? The presence of a friend is almost the only pleasure to which I am sensible. Everybody talks to me of you; everybody sees you: alas!

how happy is that ſame everybody! But do what you will, madam, you will find nobody who knows to love like me. You ſay you love me tenderly, and I am ſure you do: that is what makes me ſupport with patience the pomps and vanities of the court. Fortune, which has raiſed me, may turn her back: but there is one bleſſing which it is not in her power to take from me; and that is your friendſhip. This is the true *balm of life*, far better than that of *Le Lievre*. I hear ſome noiſe at my door: ſtay, my dear dutcheſs; I ſhall be with you again in a moment.

It was that old hunks the controuler-general, bringing me money. But for that I ſhould have rated him ſoundly, for interrupting me when writing to you. How does the duke? He is already tiring of the peace, and will, I hope, tire long: for I do not love war. Fare-

wel: when will you come and embrace me? &c.

LETTER XLI.

To the duke of NIVERNOIS. 1749.

I Approve no more than you this whim of the cardinal de Tencin, with regard to the duke of York; and wonder at the weakneſs of that prince in conſenting to it. He was not born to be a prieſt, but to ſupport the pretentions of his brother to the throne of England, and ſucceed to it in caſe of demiſe. But now is he dead himſelf by his acceptance of a red hat; and that unfortunate houſe, which has coſt ſo much blood and treaſure to France, is about to become the ſport of Europe. I hate that old Tencin for his blunder; but he and all the prieſts are like eunuchs, who would have all men like themſelves.

He perceived not how uſeful the pretentions of the Stuart-family were to France in caſe of war with the engliſh. They were a bugbear, which never failed to ſpread terror among them. Be this as it may, the miſchief is done, and the king is reſolved to give his new eminence the firſt rich abbey that ſhall become vacant: of which you may venture to aſſure him. I pity that unhappy family, which has been ſo many ages the ſport of fortune. France, which has ever been the refuge of unfortunate princes, will not abandon theſe. If ſhe cannot reſtore them to the throne of their anceſtors, at leaſt ſhe will ever lend them the means of living with dignity, and in a manner worthy their rank.

The nuns of St. Cyr have begged me to obtain for them a ſacred body to put into a new chapel they have built. Will

you be pleaſed, my lord-duke, to charge yourſelf with this good work. The court of Rome is no niggard of ſuch preſents, and will grant you one without ſcruple. But beware of ſending thoſe good girls a ſaint with two bandy legs like the St. Olive of the capuchin ſiſters. I cannot help laughing when I write you this: it is a pleaſant commiſſion for an ambaſſador and a philoſopher.

The clergy of France grow more and more turbulent: had they the upper-hand, they would revive the *dragonades* of Lewis XIV. But thanks to heaven, our moſt chriſtian king is neither a devotee, nor a perſecutor. He has, he ſays, no power over the conſciences, and wants none. Good prince! For my part, I hate intolerating prieſts; and were I ſovereign, I would perſecute none but perſecutors. You think with me, my lord-duke; and I pray you, in the name

of reaſon and humanity, to bring their intrigues to light at Rome, and to quench the firſt ſparks of that holy war which they ſo much long to kindle.

I deſire you will preſent my tender compliments to the princeſs Pamphili: ſhe is a very valuable woman, though an italian. I command you to keep good health, and conſtantly to love thoſe who love you. I am, &c.

LETTER XLII.

To the count de FRISE. 1750.

ALI. France mourns with you, the loſs of the great man who has done her ſo much honor. He was old, and loaded with infirmities: death was therefore a deliverance to him. The country alone is to be pitied, that has loſt her defender. All true frenchmen are in affliction: the king, who partakes it,

is desirous to give you marks of his esteem for marshal Saxe, and to honor him even after his death in his nephew. He allows you the castle of Chambord with all its dependencies, and the same privileges your late uncle enjoyed. As to the funeral solemnity, he will defray it in a manner worthy of himself, and of the heroe whom he regrets. Gladly would he have given him a place in the sepulture of the kings of France. But as the marshal died a lutheran, the prejudices of our religion do not permit the gracious prince to bestow on him this last proof of his gratitude. He will therefore be interred, according to his desire, in the temple of St. Thomas at Strasburg; nor do I doubt but, in the conveyance of the sad remains of that great man, the people will eagerly croud the way to pour upon his memory, such tears as were shed for marshal Turenne.

For my part, ſir, I ſhall ever honor him in you, and I dare ſay you will one day reſemble him. When any opportunity ſhall offer of promoting your ſervice, I beg you will indulge no one in the pleaſure of obliging you preferably to her who is ſo ſincerely, &c.

LETTER XLIII.

To mr. de la BEAUSSIERE *. 1749.

I Suppoſe you ſtill at Paris. The moment you receive this note, do not fail to carry two hundred louis-d'ors to the encloſed addreſs, and aſſure the perſon to whom you deliver them of my entire eſteem. The diſtreſs of the times prevents my doing better; but I hope to have the pleaſure of obliging that perſon more ſolidly another time. Till I can be ſo happy, I ſhall think of ſome place that may ſuit. &c.

* Her ſteward.

LETTER XLIV.

*To the dutcheſs d'*ETRÉES. 1750.

I Yeſterday ſaw the count, who made me compliments for you and for himſelf. He aſſured me you were well, which is the main matter: for I live in my friends.

We have juſt received a ſad piece of news. The brave Maurice lies dead in his caſtle of Chambord: this loſs is a public misfortune.

The late marſhal Villars, upon hearing that the duke of Berwick had been killed at the ſiege of Philipſburg, is ſaid to have cried out: *That has ever been a lucky man.* Poor Saxe has not had this heroic good-fortune; but has died in his bed like an old woman; and, like mr. de Catinat, believing nothing, and perhaps hoping nothing *.

* Too ſevere.

I have had occaſion to ſee him often, and think I have thoroughly traced his character. He was great only at the head of an army: everywhere elſe he had the littleneſſes of vulgar ſouls: which brings into my mind the ſaying of la Bruyere, that *It is difficult to be a hero in the eyes of ones valet-de-chambre.* His debauches have killed him, rather than age or fatigue; nor was he very delicate in his pleaſures. The two laſt years of his life, he was a walking coarſe, retaining little elſe than the name. However, in ſpite of all his failings, which are the appendage of humanity, he was a great man, to whom France ows perhaps her preſervation, and whom ſhe cannot too much regret. He will not be buried at St. Denys, becauſe the prieſts ſay he was a heretic. For my part, I love ſuch heretics, and wiſh God would ſend us ſuch another. I love

you too, my lady-dutcheſs; but I do not ſee you often enough. I am, &c.

LETTER XLV.

To the ſame.

CALLING upon you yeſterday, I was told you were at the *Palace-royal* *. I flew thither and found you not. The dutcheſs was occupied in a manner that our fair ones of Paris would hold ſupremely ridiculous: gueſs how. She was embroidering ruffles for her beloved duke. There is a certain princeſs in Homer, who goes to the well to waſh the ſhirts of her brothers, and complains that they are too dirty. But in thoſe ſimple times, the princeſſes had hands of country-laſſes; which is not the faſhion now. The dutcheſs ſhowed

* A palace in Paris, belonging to the duke of Orleans.

me abundance of kindneſs, and we talked of you in the manner you deſerve. I ſaw with a certain vanity that ſhe eſteems you as much as I do, and I eſteem her the more.

I have ſeen the wretched rapſody upon marſhal Saxe. Were he yet alive, he would bluſh at the flat and ridiculous manner in which he is praiſed. For my part, I believe that thoſe only, who are capable of imitating great men, are capable of praiſing them; and I take the encomium of a fool as an affront.

But, on the ſubject of poor Saxe, he had ſometimes peculiar notions. On my aſking him one day why he had never married, *Madam*, ſaid he, *as the world now goes, there are few men to whom I could wiſh to be father, and few women to whom I could wiſh to be conſort.* This anſwer was not gallant, yet is it not without ſome ray of reaſon. He ſaid,

moreover, that a wife was not a piece of luggage for a ſoldier. In ſpite of all that, he kept girls, who at laſt proved the death of him; and it was an actreſs that gave him the finiſhing ſtroke: by this you may judge of his company.

We are here to have next ſaturday a repreſentation of *Mahomet*. Come and there learn with me to deteſt ſuperſtition, and to admire Voltaire. We have a thouſand verſemongers; but we have only one poet. He came yeſterday morning to do me his homage: but if he treated me like a queen, I received him alſo better than a king; for great talents ought to be honored. If he believe not in God, as ſome pretend, ſo much the worſe for him: that does not hinder him from being a great man in his way; it is pity he ſhould grow old.

Tell my lord-duke that I hate him, becauſe he came hither without ſeing

me. One would think that valuable men fled me in order to leave me a prey to a mob of animals in human ſhape, who tire me to death, and whom I deſpiſe like the devil. If he repent, and amend with all poſſible ſpeed, I may perhaps forgive him. Farewel, my dear dutcheſs, and be always chearful, if you would be always beautiful: dulneſs makes one ugly. &c.

LETTER XLVI.

To madam de la POUPLINIERE.

I Did not imagine, madam, that we ſhould ever have any thing to ſay to each other. You have written me a violent letter, and I ſhall give you an anſwer full of moderation. I know that you have ſome time been at the head of the fair ones who have deſigns upon the king's heart. You follow him every-

where: he finds you always in ambuſcade to ſurprize him, and that makes us laugh. For this I beg your pardon, madam; one ought rather to pity folly than laugh at it. You now go farther, and inſult me by a letter, void alike of ſenſe and of juſtice, as if I were the only obſtacle in the way of your ambition. I have the misfortune, madam, not to know all your merit; and though you have done your beſt to make it known to the moſt chriſtian king, he knows no more of it than myſelf.

You are the wife of a rich and valuable man: endeavor to pleaſe him only. But if you are outrageouſly bent upon pleaſing a prince, carry on the fine project peaceably, without taking umbrage at me, who have not the honor to know you, nor the ſagacity to value you. This is the firſt time I have taken the liberty to write to you; it will alſo be

the laſt. Charity has dictated this epiſtle; and, if the folly of a woman is not an incurable diſtemper, I wiſh it may operate a good effect: being &c.

LETTER XLVII,

To mr. CAMPBEL.

I Am proud of the remembrance of prince Edward, and gratified by all your politeneſſes; but I am afraid the thing he meditates will be attended with difficulty. I ſhall, however, do my utmoſt to ſerve him, through eſteem for him and regard for his illuſtrious houſe. The king, who was with much reluctance forced to force him away, will never abandon his intereſts; and of this you may aſſure him. His marriage with the princeſs of Modena would be ſome ſmall equivalent to his pretentions, and would at leaſt afford him a ſettle-

ment. Nothing will here be neglected, that can promote it. He has done ſo much for us, that we are bound in gratitude to do ſomewhat for him. There are ſome, even of this country, who ſtick not to ſay that the king never had any ſerious intention to reeſtabliſh him on the throne of his anceſtors, and that he ſent him into Scotland only for a bugbear to the engliſh. To my certain knowlege theſe people tell a ly. France could not befriend him, as ſhe wiſhed: the enemy was maſter of the ſea, ſo that it was impoſſible to carry over into Britain the troops deſtined to ſupport his cauſe. In a new war (for the two nations, whoſe hatred is reciprocal, cannot live long in peace) In a new war, I ſay, a more favorable opportunity will perhaps be found. Till ſuch happy juncture, the king, who loves prince Edward, and pities him, is reſolved to ſerve him with all his power.

Is it true that he was attacked near Francfort by maſked aſſaſſins; that he killed one, and dangerouſly wounded two others? His bravery is well known; but it is a ſad thing for him to be obliged to exert it upon murderers: were the ruffians engliſh?

I beg, ſir, you will preſent to him my reſpectful ſervice. His cauſe is the cauſe of kings, and could aught in my little power conduce to make it triumph, I ſhould look upon ſuch effort as the moſt glorious of my life. I am, &c.

LETTER XLVIII.

To mr. de FUISIEUX, *miniſter of ſtate.*

1750.

I Am amazed at thoſe dogs of Spaniards. Has not France done enough for them? Lewis XIV. after above fifty years' glorious reign, found himſelf on the brink of the precipice for

having inſiſted upon ſupporting the king, whom the laſt prince of the houſe of Auſtria had named his ſucceſſor, and prevented the partition of their monarchy. Lewis XV. has carried on a long and bloody war, which has been of no uſe but to don Philip, by the honorable ſettlement procured to him in Italy. So many ſervices, rendered to Spain at the expence of France, would ſeem to demand ſome gratitude. Yet does ſhe perſiſt in refuſing to us, as to all other nations, the entrance of her american ports, without making the ſmalleſt difference between her friends and her enemies. The engliſh themſelves appear more favored than we, by the advantageous and important *Aſſiento*-treaty.

The ambition and vanity of Lewis XIV. were ſatisfied: he ſecured before his death the crown of Spain to his

houſe. But too often the ambition and vanity of princes prove the miſery of their people; as happened by this connexion of the two monarchies.

Till that epoch France had almoſt always been at war with Spain; and had ſo exhauſted her, that Charles II. was fain to coin falſe money. Our corſairs fell in with her galleons, and our colonies ſubſiſted at the coſt of hers. But the change is total, ſince her king has been of the houſe of Bourbon. Delivered from a formidable foe, ſhe daily augments her power, and will quickly reappear with her ancient ſplendor, through the cloſe alliance of the two crowns. We fight and ſpend for her.

Such, ſir, are ſome of the inſtructions which it were perhaps proper to ſend to our ambaſſador at Madrid, for his guidance in the preſent negotiation; if, however, you ſo approve. The deſire

of being uſeful, and of pleaſing the king, gets the better of my natural inclinations: for I am not fond of politics, a ſcience little ſuiting my ſex. Yet am I obliged to dabble in them whether I will or no; elſe with you, politicians, I ſhould not underſtand the language of the country.

I beg you will ſend me your courier, before you diſpatch him. I have a packet of compliments to give him for various *dons* and *donnaes*. &c.

LETTER XLIX.

To the counteſs of NOAILLES.

I Pity and admire the courage of poor little Vaubonne, who poiſoned herſelf in order to avoid the embraces of a man ſhe could not love. The hapleſs girl has faln a victim to the avarice of her parents. How cruel was it to force

her to wed a wretch of ſixty with a glaſs-eye and wooden-leg! It was reviving the torture of that Mezentius, who bound the living to the dead. They ſay that, when led into the nuptial chamber, ſhe withdrew into an adjoining cloſet, while the monſter was undreſſing; and that there ſhe took a glaſs of poiſon, which diſpatched her in a quarter of an hour. I do by no means approve of ſuicide: I hope, however, that God has extended his mercy to her, who committed rather the crime of her family than her own.

I yeſterday ſaw the venetian ambaſſadreſs, who loves you and praiſes you highly. The more do I value her: for a perſon muſt have merit, in order to diſcern it in others.

The pregnancy of the dauphineſs is juſt declared, and all are in high glee. Do you rejoice too, and love me. &c.

LETTER L.

To the ſame.

LAST night happened an odd adventure, which has occaſioned a good deal of confuſion: it was this. A man got in, I do not know how, into the apartment of Madam, while ſhe was abed and aſleep, threw himſelf on her bed, and embraced her. And now behold the poor princeſs awaking, ſtruggling, ſhrieking. People ruſh in and find her faln by the bedſide faſt lockt in the embraces of the man, who would not let her go. He is carried to priſon, to be puniſhed for his temerity; but upon enquiry is found to be a ſleep-walker who holds a little poſt at court, and never fails to ramble a-nights in his ſleep, unleſs he be lockt up with care. He has therefore been releaſed, and

every one laughs at the adventure, except Madam, who appears ſomewhat out of countenance.

Such is the news of the day. Your Mairan has preſented his book to the king, who received it graciouſly. How ſtupid a look he has! and yet everybody ſays he is a great man: but all the geometricians look fooliſh. Concerning that author, I have been favored with a little anecdote, which made me laugh. His houſe had by chance taken fire, which was juſt getting into the ſecond floor, where he was plodding calmly over his circles and triangles. He is ſummoned to fly without delay, if he would not have the pleaſure of being burned alive, and to give his orders in the preſſing emergency: *Talk to my wife*, ſays he; *I meddle with none of thoſe matters.* Upon which he ſits him contentedly down to muſe on the moon as be-

fore. It was now therefore high time to force him from his ſtudy, and carry him out of the houſe. What animals!

I am going to church, and ſhall pray to God for poor dear Coſine. Is ſhe indeed ſo very ill? Should ſhe come to dy, I ſhould ſympathize with all the good folks that love her.

Farewel: love me ſtill more, and loſe no opportunity of letting me know it. &c.

LETTER LI.

*To the dutcheſs d'*ETRÉES.

THAT knight-errant Baville is returned from the *gloomy iſland*, and talks with enthuſiaſm of the engliſh women. The philoſophers of that country, ſays he, have enlightened the world, and the women embelliſh it. But, ſaid the king, thoſe ſame engliſh beauties are alledged to be very pale ones. *Ah!*

ſir, replied that original, *it is the very color of tenderneſs and pleaſure; and were I but thirty years old, I ſhould more dread thoſe pale cheeks than all our red phyzzes of Paris. If the paradiſe of Mahomet exiſts, they can be none but engliſh women who conſtitute the bliſs of the ſaints.*

What aſtoniſhes Baville is, that the engliſh have no gallant verſes; for, ſays he, fine women ought to inſpire fine ſentiments. He propoſes, twenty years hence, to make a ſecond pilgrimage to England, to ſee if the daughters reſemble their mothers. He diverts us daily by his extravagances: in ſhort, he is as much enchanted as if he juſt iſſued from the palace of Armida. He declares that, on his coming to London, the ſullen temper of the men had like to have thrown him into vapors; but that the beauty, the wit, and the graces of the women quickly diſpelled his dud-

geon. In ſpite of all his encomiums, he finds, however, one great fault in thoſe lovely ladies; that they are too fond of our faſhions. So long as the engliſh-women, ſays he, ſhall be neither more nor leſs than engliſh-women, they will continue a ſex divine; but ſpeedily they will be french-women, and then the french-women will carry it.

I believe, after all, that he is not abſolutely in the wrong for crying up ſo highly the women of that country: I have myſelf ſeen ſome that were charming, but few agreable men. That ſame Baville has not, however, forgot you: he remembers that he left at Paris a little goddeſs-face, to which he purpoſes ſoon to pay new adoration. Goodluck go with him! I begin to grow ſick of him. I think alſo of ſurpriſing you one of theſe days. But do not expect me. Farewel, my dear; I love you tenderly.

LETTER LII.

To the marquis of ST. CONTEST.

1750.

THE retreat of mr. de Puiſieux leaves vacant the department of foreign affairs. He was a good miniſter: the king wants a ſtill better, and you are the man of his choice. You made the peace: come and preſerve it, which is a yet harder taſk. The hollanders will regret you, becauſe they eſteem you: but I do not imagine you will regret them. The marſhal de Belliſle ſays, that the embaſſy of Holland is the moſt difficult and diſagreable of any. In other courts, one has to do with princes and men of a liberal turn: but with thoſe merchants, who trample upon the crucifix * at Japan to get money, negotiations are carried on like an article of trade;

* Incredible!

and they treat with kings as with their correſpondents, ever intent upon what they can gain.

Quit therefore, ſir, thoſe frigid batavians, in order to do honor to your country by talents and by knowlege, which the king means to reward. I have had my ſhare in the obligations, which he will diſcharge for me. &c.

LETTER LIII.

To the earl of ALBEMARLE. 1750.

My lord,

I Am informed that, the day before yeſterday, in a large company and at the end of a great entertainment, you dropt ſome hints about me, that are neither juſt, nor ſuitable to the dignity of an ambaſſador. Everybody knows that you are a man of pleaſure; but I did not know that you were capable of taking any in pulling to pieces an abſent

woman, who has for you neither hate nor eſteem. Were you a ſubject of the king, I would wreak my vengeance, by ſcorning you in ſecret. But, as you are the ambaſſador of a reſpectable nation, I muſt be permitted through regard for her, and not for you, here to expoſe your injuſtice.

Your memorial and complaints upon the reeſtabliſhment of the french marine have been read in council, and found ſupremely ridiculous. It is juſt as if you took amiſs that a man who has the ague, ſhould preſume to take the bark. The miniſter ſhowed me the fine memorial, and I gave him my opinion of it in this fable:

Peace being made among the animals, the wolf ſaid to the hedgehog: Why doſt thou not get rid of thy ſpikes? I am very willing, replied the latter, ſo thou begin with drawing thy teeth.

This was, my lord, all I ſaid, and all that became me to ſay, when conſulted. The fable diſpleaſed you; who, in revenge, loaded me with calumny. This conduct is neither generous nor genteel, eſpecially on the part of a ſtranger who knows me not at all, and whom I do not chooſe to know. I doubt much whether the king of England, your maſter, ſent you hither for ſuch purpoſes. I eſteem your nation, and therefore could wiſh that he who repreſented her here, were a true and decent man; and that the table, which conſtitutes his delight, were not a ſcene of illiberal ſatire.

Pardon, my lord, the liberty I take: if you continue to ſpeak evil, I ſhall not be ſurpriſed; but ſhall no more complain. I am, &c.

LETTER LIV.

To the marquis de SAINT-CONTEST, *minister of state.*

I Do not like this affair of Valbure. Encouraged he should have been, not ennobled. Behold now an eminent trader transformed into a petty gentleman. In spite of all the fine arguments for ennobling commerce, I do not believe it proper in an absolute monarchy. A merchant ought to render himself respectable by his fair dealing and the services he renders his country, without seeking distinctions by barren parchments, which do but make him ridiculous. You know the famous Bernard: he has in like manner obtained the title of count; but nobody has given it him.

In a monarchical state are two orders essentially separate and distinct, the no-

bles and the plebeians. The functions of the former are to defend it: thoſe of the latter to feed and to enrich it, without ever aſpiring to uſeleſs honors, which are not made for them. I never induced the king, nor ſhall I ever induce him to ennoble any one: but I am not always conſulted.

This matter of vanity, which is nothing in itſelf, may prove dangerous in its conſequences; ſince the preſent diſpoſition ſeems tending to ennoble all that diſtinguiſh themſelves in commerce; which will throw every order of the ſtate into confuſion, and bring perhaps a revolution in the government.

In a monarchy the king gives a kick to his prime miniſter; he to the great officers of the crown, who deliver it to their inferiors, in conſtant ſucceſſion through the various ranks, till it terminate in the loweſt of the ſubjects.

In republics, it is quite another thing. He who finds himself in the laſt place, may riſe to the firſt; and ſo is there always a ſort of equality ſubſiſting among the members of ſociety. They are all citizens: there is by the conſtitution no permanent diſtinction among them; they are all nobles and legiſlators.

If in France the ranks come to be blended; if a merchant may become a gentleman, and continue his trade, every diſtinction will be aboliſhed, and by degrees the monarchy will change into a commonwealth. That is the thing to be feared, and which I fear. Continue, ſir, to ſerve the king faithfully, and to enlighten him: he is a good prince, but ſometimes too eaſy; ever diſpoſed to do what is right, but apt to give ear to counſels that to him appear uſeful, and of which he foreſees not the conſequences. For my part, I ſhall ſecond you in what-

ever ſhall ſeem to me reaſonable, and ſuited to the nature of the french government. If I miſtake, it ſhall not be my fault: every impartial perſon will forgive involuntary (at leaſt invincible) errors.

My tender compliments to my lady-marchioneſs: I ſhould be very glad to ſee her. &c.

LETTER LV.

To mr. de PAULMI, *miniſter of ſtate.*

1750.

I Am very glad, ſir, that the king has thought of you. He has called you to the miniſtry, becauſe he thinks you highly capable of ſerving him. I think ſo too, and was not likely to violate truth in order to ſpeak againſt you. If you perform the duties of the painful employment he has deigned to beſtow

on you, with an exactneſs equal to your abilities, he will be ſatisfied: and this is all the acknowlegement I require of you. Your predeceſſors have thrown your department into much confuſion: it is hoped you will rectify the abuſes.

Madam de Paulmi came to thank me in form: I do not love thoſe compliments. I ſhall always endeavor to promote merit; and whoever ſhows himſelf worthy of what I do for him, by his conduct ſpeaks his gratitude: Why thank me for having been juſt?

I beg you will call upon me next ſaturday, before you go to council. An important queſtion is there to be canvaſſed, in which I am warmly intereſted. But I fear thoſe cool heads of our miniſters, who, by their wond'rous prudence, often prove void of reaſon. The ſenechal de Brézé, one day ſeing Lewis XI. on horſeback, ſaid: *That horſe car-*

ries the king and his council; becauſe that prince conſulted nobody, and ſometimes found his account in it. It is the cuſtom in all aſſemblies to decide by the majority; it were often better to decide by the minority. I doubt not but you are of my opinion.

Farewel, ſir; if what you are pleaſed to call my favor can be of any uſe to you, I deſire you may always addreſs yourſelf to me: it is I, who will be obliged. &c.

LETTER LVI.

To the counteſs of BRE'ZE'. 1750.

IT is eight days, it is an age ſince I ſaw you, my fair counteſs; you are very cruel. Do you believe then that I can live ſo long without ſeing the perſons that are dear to me? I am young, I am handſom, as they tell me: every

one adores me, or at leaſt pretends it; and yet I languiſh. I have a ſecret melancholy, which nothing can divert, except the preſence of thoſe I love. What dreadful emptineſs in that grandeur and thoſe pleaſures of courts, which ſo many deſire for want of knowing them! I verily believe I ſhall become a philoſopher, and that after thoroughly knowing the vanities of the world, I ſhall conclude by deſpiſing them. Come quickly, embrace and conſole me.

The cardinal de Rohan is dead then; that ambitious prieſt who killed Lewis XIV. by tormenting him with ſcruples which he had not himſelf, and made him dy a perſecutor. I ſincerely love religion; but find difficulty to love her miniſters, eſpecially ſince I have known them.

I have ſeen your damſel de la Loubere: ſhe is pretty and amiable. For

your ſake I ſhall take care of her, ſo ſhe prove worthy of it.

Farewel; I kiſs your ſweet countenance: fail not to bring it hither one day of this week. &c.

LETTER LVII.

To the marquis de VANDIERE *. 1750.

WHY, brother, have not I ſeen you this fortnight? While you are perhaps taken up with your pleaſures, I am taken up with your intereſts. Come inſtantly and thank the king, who has appointed you controuler of his buildings. The place is like that of Petronius: you are to be the *umpire of elegance*, and patron of the fine arts. But for this purpoſe it will behove you to ſtudy them, and not to credit thoſe

* Since *marquis de* MARIGNI.

petty flatterers who beſet men in office, and praiſe them for qualities they do not poſſeſs. Voltaire finely ſays:

How merit hails her own reward!
What grace and greatneſs beam in pelf!
How ſatisfied is then my lord,
Like other wiſemen, with himſelf!

For your honor and mine be not that *my lord*: I hope you will render yourſelf worthy the bounties of the king.

I ſend you ſomething for my little Alexandrina: do not come hither without ſeing her and embracing her for me. Give fifty louis-d'ors to her governeſs. I love that woman, and am greatly ſatisfied with her care. I ſhall ſurely do ſomewhat for her: for one ſhould be juſt, and reward merit.

Farewel, my dear brother; I expect and embrace you.

LETTER LVIII.

To the duke of MIREPOIX. 1751.

YOUR diſpatches, my lord-duke, have appeared more important than you imagine; nor are we without apprehenſion that thoſe quibbles about the limits of Canada may produce a rupture at laſt. Your king George is a german, and brews us a national quarrel. The engliſh, not famed for politicians, have had however the addreſs, in the treaty of Aix-la-chapelle, to leave that point undecided, and to refer the diſcuſſion of it to commiſſaries; in conſequence of which that famous peace, which ſeemed to enſure a long repoſe to Europe, proves virtually no more than a ſuſpenſion of arms, that gives them time to breath, and to prepare themſelves for a new war. Mr.

de Monteſquieu ſays that the engliſh know nothing about negotiation. I cannot tell what he thinks of this ſtroke of policy on their part; but the overſight of our plenipotentiaries is unpardonable. The ſnare was viſible, and yet, like children, have they ruſhed into it. However, we muſt put on a good face, and not look afraid. Is it poſſible that an engliſhman ſhould have ſaid in full parliament, that a ſhot muſt not be fired at ſea without the permiſſion of Great-Britain? The aſſertion is ridiculous as it is inſolent: but it ſpeaks the ſpirit of the nation which has its juſtice, like its religion, peculiar. I have read, I do not know where, that the athenians took an oath to conſider in the domain of their commonwealth every place where a vine or an olivetree grew. The engliſh do not take this oath, but conform to it wonderfully in practice.

My lord Albemarle paſſes his time pleaſingly here. The king of England, who loves him, I cannot gueſs why, ſends him his leſſon quite ready; which he comes and repeats, like a ſchool-boy, to the miniſter of foreign affairs. This poor ambaſſador would never have been a marquis of Bothmar, and he it is that ſuits us the beſt. As for you, my lord-duke, it is hoped you will do honor to your nation by your vigilance and talents. It is particularly now that you would need the eyes of Argus to ſee and watch every motion. Albemarle's amuſement is drinking: be it yours to ſerve with zeal your king and country.

Farewel, dear ambaſſador: love always your friends, and rely upon them.

LETTER LIX.

To the marquis of SAINT-CONTEST.

1751.

YOUR letter, ſir, ſurpriſes me: this blunder of mr. de Beuvron, which would not be pardonable in a child, is much leſs ſo in an ambaſſador. The particulars of that whimſical adventure have been more minutely told me. At the *gala* was a vaſt deal of dancing, according to the cuſtom of Germany. The princeſs, who had not ſpared herſelf on an occaſion ſo flattering to female vanity, was at length fain to throw herſelf into an elbow-chair to take a little reſpite. In this moment comes Beuvron, and preſents her his hand to dance another minuet. The princeſs gives a polite refuſal, declaring herſelf exceſſively

tired. Upon which, Beuvron bawls out a diſreſpect to his maſter, as if his maſter had ſent him into Germany for the noble purpoſe of dancing. Inſtant he orders a poſt-chaiſe, and ſets out at midnight without taking leave. Ridiculous wild-fire! the king laughed at it outwardly, but is provoked againſt him. You will receive orders to ſend back that punctilious obſerver of honor to his former poſt, and to warn him againſt vanity for the future.

Accounts from the Indies are highly agreable: we have then the pleaſure to ſee the french name reſpected to the utmoſt ends of the earth. The ridiculous embaſſy of Siam is ſaid to have tickled Lewis the great, more than would the conqueſt of a province. The negotiation of mr. Dupleix, who has contrived to fix the inconſtant temper of the marats, to get himſelf declared

their captain-general, and to procure us an important and exclusive commerce, is of far greater weight, and will make one of the most glorious epochs of this reign. That mr. Dupleix lives, we are told, at Pondicherry, with the pomp of an asiatic prince. He has five hundred slaves to attend him in his airings, a much more numerous guard than that of any king in Europe. A score of them carry his palanquin; thirty others are employed as his fly-flaps. There is a happy man, if indeed happiness can be found in vanity.

However, we need reproach no more his luxury than his riches: he has effectually served his nation, while we have here forty rascals devouring her, and living with almost equal pageantry. It is to be hoped that the India-company will now reappear with a lustre, which she never saw in the finest times

of Lewis XIV. but I fear ſhe will not long preſerve it. The engliſh will not fail to be jealous, nor will they forget any thing to baffle our expectations. Yet let us ſtill hope: it is at leaſt a pleaſing dream: we muſt not anticipate misfortune.

All the world is amazed at this great revolution. Dupleix is not a man of genius: but there are perſons who perform great things with very moderate talents. Fortune claims frequently a greater ſhare in public tranſactions, than the capacity of the negotiators.

There will ſhortly, you know, be a grand council upon indian affairs: and by certain hints dropt from ſome of the members that compoſe it, I am much afraid all will be ſpoiled, and have been anxious to give you timely intimation. I hope you will ſupport upon the occaſion the honor of your country, and

not contribute by timid counſels to render her contemptible, in ſacrificing preſent advantages to the fear of uncertain inconveniences to come. You are an able and truſty miniſter: we may rely upon you. I ſalute you, ſir: forget not in your firſt diſpatches the private packet for the duke of Mirepoix.

I am, &c.

LETTER LX.

To the duke of NIVERNOIS, *ambaſſador at Rome.* 1751.

YOUR grace's letters do me always great pleaſure: I find but one fault in them, that they are too ſhort. You treat me as a young woman wholely taken up with the world and its vanities, whom reaſon does but give to yawn. If you think ſo of me, my lord-duke, you wrong me. I look upon

you as the wiſeſt and honeſteſt man of France: your letters honor me, inſtruct me, and afford me a pure ſatisfaction, untaſted in the tumult of courts.

The king talks of you with the greateſt eſteem; and I underſtand that your new romans, though ſo different from the old, have however for your genius and virtues the reſpect which they deſerve.

I could have wiſhed to have ſtood behind you at your late audience. The good Benedict XIV. values not himſelf ſo much upon the title of holineſs as upon that of honor: I love him the more. All Europe ſees this day with aſtoniſhment a reaſonable and philoſophical pope. Notwithſtanding all that, he is a prieſt, however reſpectable he be; and I am ſurpriſed that kings ſhould continue to ſend ambaſſadors to prieſts, who actually can no longer do them

either good or harm: for now all the world begins to ſhow teeth to the old beard of Rome. His bulls and excommunications are become *filthy rags*.

Inſtead of indulgences and other holy baubles, you have ſent me profane pictures, which I like better. They are beautiful and well choſen: your excellence in every thing appears.

We hope to ſee you at the nuptials of mademoiſelle de Nivernois. She is beauteous as an angel, wiſe, modeſt, ſenſible, and ſprightly; in one word, worthy you. I deem the count de Giſors very happy. Nor is the king leſs ſo in the pleaſure of ſo cloſely uniting two illuſtrious families. What I admire and love in that prince, is neither his rank nor his power; but his goodneſs. For that is God ador'd, and God in him.

Farewel, my lord-duke; grudge me not the continuance of your friendſhip. I flatter myſelf I deſerve it by my eſteem for you. I am, &c.

LETTER LXI.

To mr. de MONTESQUIEU. 1751.

I Received your book, and am much obliged to you for it. So admirable do I think it, that I have given it the firſt place in a little library, which is compoſed merely of authors that, like you, do honor to France, and excite the envy of the foreign world. You merit the title of legiſlator of Europe; nor do I doubt but it will ſoon be unanimouſly allowed you.

As I have juſt now a little leiſure, let us have a little talk. You pronounce it impoſſible that the chriſtian religion ſhould ſubſiſt five hundred years longer

in Europe. It is true that moſt prieſts do what they can to deſtroy it by their ambition and intolerance. The world has long been blind; but it begins to find its eyes, and to make uſe of them. My great fear is, leſt the philoſophers, who ſee twice as far as other folks, ſhould be too zealous on the occaſion.

The chriſtian religion is true, holy, and full of comfort. The point is not to deſtroy, but to reform her; to lop the uſeleſs branches, not cut down the tree. I have ſometimes heard of the quakers of England: I do not like that they ſhould fancy themſelves inſpired by the holy ſpirit to ſpeak nonſenſe in their aſſemblies; but I do love their wiſdom in keeping clear of prieſts. Religion is good: it is only her miniſters that are often miſcreants. It will by and by be a ſhame, they ſay, to be a chriſtian: if ſo, it will be their fault,

Beſides, I daily ſee that the romiſh religion makes bad ſubjects by acknowleging a foreign power ſuperior to that of the country: our biſhops are not frenchmen, but ſubjects of the pope.

One practice, which has always diſpleaſed me in our religion, but which muſt however be reſpected, is confeſſion. How open your heart to a ſtranger, who is perhaps laughing at you, and poſſibly as great a ſinner as yourſelf?

The faſting enjoined us, pleaſes me no better. It is the phyſician's affair, and very good againſt intemperance: but I doubt much whether a raſcal, who has not broke his faſt, be more pleaſing to God, than an honeſt man who has eat a good dinner.

I go ſometimes to ſermon, and there I tire to death. Thoſe ſanctified harangues have produced a thouſand fana-

tics, but never one good man. As for your moral ſermons, they are well-meant, but unavailing. To what purpoſe exhort an engliſhman to be humble, a farmer-general to be diſintereſted? You may as well ſay to a ſick perſon; Sir, I deſire you to have no fever. Vices are the diſeaſes of the ſoul: it is not ſermons will cure them.

In ſpite of all the abuſes and uſages that to me appear uſeleſs in our religion, I have the profoundeſt reverence for her. But that reverence does not deny me to condemn the intolerating ſpirit of our clergy. I am told the bigots are preparing to attack you, becauſe you have ſpoken freely, not againſt the faith, but againſt ſuperſtition. I hope that Lewis XV. will never be a perſecutor: he is an honeſt man, and no bigot. If, however, the junto ſhould extort from him any violent reſolution, this letter

will anſwer for me, that I ſhall have no ſhare in it.

I thank you, ſir, for your compliments: though I deſerve them not, they muſt give me ſome vanity, when I conſider from what quarter they come. I beg my civilities to the dutcheſs of Aiguillon: happy ſhe who ſees and hears you every day. I have not the ſatisfaction of converſing with the wiſe: for here are none. We have only machines, and not one man, but the king. Come ſometimes and ſee me; come, and inſtruct, and comfort me. I am, &c.

LETTER LXII.

To the marquis of SAINT-CONTEST.

1751.

YES, ſir, I did recommend the marquis of Bonac, for the embaſſy of Holland, and I am pleaſed

that all the world ſhould know it. Though I am not perſonally acquainted with him, people of real merit, and whom I value as ſuch, ſpeak ſo much to his advantage, that I thought it a duty to intereſt myſelf in his favor: it is a debt to merit, which I ſhall always pay. I know that, in general, military men are not the moſt proper for negotiation, as not having that paſſive and pliant temper, ſo uſeful in public affairs. But this rule has, doubtleſs, exceptions; and mr. de Bonac is one: he can both fight and ſpeak. Beſides, this is the reign of military men: Lewis XV. has ſcarce ever employed any other in negotiation. Biſhops were employed formerly: I know not if they were better. I hope that Bonac will make himſelf as much eſteemed by the dutch as you have been, and will do himſelf equal honor. This is the only acknowlege-

ment I expect from the perſons I ſerve; it is the only one I have expected from you: nor have you proved ungrateful.

I am, &c.

LETTER LXIII.

To the count of MAUREPAS, *miniſter of marine.* 1751.

YOU are, my lord, the king's oldeſt ſervant, and ſo ought to be his wiſeſt. Muſt a woman have to complain of an old man, whom ſhe has never offended? I underſtand that you divert yourſelf every night in your petty parties, not only at my expence, which is a ſmall matter, but even at that of a maſter, whom you ought to reverence. You then make uſe of expreſſions equally unjuſt and indecent, which become neither your age nor your rank. Did you attack only me, I ſhould pardon and deſpiſe you: but when a man,

forgetting the decency of his character and the laws of his duty, dares to inſult the beſt of princes, who has loaded him with honors and benefits, give me leave to tell you that it is a ſhameful degree of baſeneſs.

In ſpite of all your injuries, my lord, I ſhall not be unjuſt: I ſhall, without difficulty, acknowlege that you are a good miniſter, and have ably ſerved the king. But you ought not to content yourſelf with ſerving him: duty and gratitude oblige you moreover to reſpect him. If he has weakneſſes, you are not his judge: he is yours. Pleaſe to excuſe this hint, which is better than a compliment. I am, &c.

LETTER LXIV.

To the counteſs of NOAILLES. 1751.

THE holy archbiſhop of Paris is a conſtant diſturber; he diſtreſſes

the king, and consequently me: very different is he from your great uncle. How I do hate those priests who so plague Lewis the *well-beloved!* but they say it is the cause of God.

In France are but two orders that dare resist the government, and which often do resist it with success; the long robe and the clergy. The king wants firmness: he has passed his life in making edicts and revoking them. The regent Philip, who neither feared God, nor regarded man, knew better how to be obeyed.

I received yesterday the visit of the ambassador of their high-mightinesses, who presented me with the compliments of the republic. The hollanders are aukward animals; but they have one great merit: they are rich. Merit consisted formerly in valor and virtue: every thing changes.

There was play laſt night in the king's apartment, who won a great deal: but one ſcene paſſed, which diſpleaſed me. The king had before him a huge heap of gold, when his ſleeve chanced to tip over a louis-d'or, which he preſently ſtoopt to pick up. The prince of —— who played againſt him, and had marked what paſſed, at once overthrew a hundred deſignedly, without deigning to mind them at all.

The king could not forbear ſaying to him: Couſin, why do not you pick up what is faln? A trifle, replied his highneſs: it is for the ſweepers. His majeſty felt the ſarcaſm, and quitted the game. Yet that prince knows better than anybody that the king is neither ſtingy, nor capable of being ſo. It is not yet a fortnight ſince he paid that very prince's debts, which amounted to above a million, at a time when his only

credit left was with his paſtrycook. But he cares not how ungrateful he be, ſo he ſay a biting thing.

Have you ſeen Nolivaux? I charged him with a little affair, which I have much at heart; for the buſineſs is to relieve an honeſt family, that has been recommended to me. Particularly in ſuch a caſe is diligence requiſite: he will have time enough beſide for his pleaſures.

Mademoiſelle de Randan proves the ornament of the court, by her diſcretion no leſs than by her beauty. All that belong to you, are perfect like yourſelf. Farewel: if you are not ungrateful, my dear, you will love me always.

LETTER LXV.

To the dutcheſs d' ETRÉES. 1751.

WE are going to rejoice for the recovery of the dauphin. The king has ſuffered during his ilneſs all that a good king and a good father can ſuffer: thoſe moments have been the ſaddeſt of my life. Mr. de Paulmi, who had been ſent into the ſouthern provinces of France to examine the ſtate of the troops and fortreſſes, related to us at his return, that at the time the proteſtants of Languedoc were ſuppoſed in act to revolt againſt their ſovereign, they were aſſembled in their temples, imploring heaven for the recovery of the heir of the crown. The king was melted at the relation.

I have contrived a little allegorical entertainment, to teſtify my zeal upon the occaſion; and have communicated it

to the king, who does not ſeem diſpleaſed with it. The ſcene, which is in the caſtle of Bellevue, repreſents different caverns ſurrounded by a piece of water, in the middle of which ſwims a luminous dolphin. Various monſters, vomiting fire and flames, come to aſſail him. But the gods protect him: Apollo deſcends on a cloud, and fulminates the monſters; after which ſome fireworks complete their extermination. At this moment the ſcene changes, and repreſents the palace of the ſun reſplendent, where the dolphin reappears in his former luſtre by means of a great illumination.

I expect, madam, you will come and ſee all this. It is a ſmall matter; but nothing is indifferent to friendſhip; and this letter is an invitatory ticket, though you do not need it. Bring all Paris, if you pleaſe: everybody will be welcome for your ſake. &c.

LETTER LXVI.

To the duke of MIREPOIX. 1752.

I AM much afraid, my lord-duke, you have too great confidence in the promiſes and proteſtations of your old king. All men are liars, and kings like other men. Beſides, ſuppoſing him even ſincerely diſpoſed to live at peace, it is not in his power. If he does not ſet his ſubjects by the ears with foreign enemies, they become his; and ſo he is forced to be unjuſt in ſelf-defence. Mind not therefore what is ſaid at court, but what is ſaid on the exchange of London: for in England the merchants alone call for war, and cauſe it to be declared when they pleaſe. You are upon the ſpot, and conſequently more in the way of making thoſe obſerva-

The little marquis has ſhown me one of your letters, where you talk of the engliſhwomen with tranſport: a ſubject perhaps not over ſuitable to an ambaſſador, who ought never to mention fine women, leſt he ſhould be ſuſpected of loving them too well.

Intrigue and gallantry are pardonable in a man of pleaſure, who can contrive nothing better to do; but I imagine them ſcandalous in a public man, unleſs he have ſtrength enough of ſoul to make love, like Auguſtus, through policy.

There is now a man at London, who has made bloody verſes againſt me. He has fled, they ſay, to avoid my reſentment. But he may return: though a woman, I can forgive injuries; I can even do good to my enemies, and compel them, if not to love me, at leaſt to have ſome eſteem for me. I wiſh he knew it: he had better come back

and entertain the french with his fine verſes, than go and be plaguing ſtrangers, who will perhaps believe him, and ſurely will deſpiſe him.

I would fain have ſome engliſh horſes; which are the beſt thing, I am told, in the land you live in. I ſhall take the liberty to charge you with this little commiſſion; and I beg your excellences pardon for turning an ambaſſador, a duke and peer, into a jockey: but friendſhip dignifies every thing. Pick me ſix for a ſet, and ſend them me as ſoon as you can.

You have enemies here, who ſay that you are more engaged in pleaſure than in buſineſs: I tell them plainly they ly; and the king credits me, becauſe he loves you. I flatter myſelf that you will alſo give thoſe gentlemen the ly, and that you will gain at London the ſame reputation which the famous d'Eſ-

trades did in Holland under the laſt reign. This I deſire for your ſake and mine; for I look upon the honor of my friends as my own.

I bid your grace farewel.

LETTER LXVII.

To the duke of RICHELIEU. 1752.

I Think it is time, my lord-duke, to mention to your grace a deſign I have long had in my head, and of which I have already given you ſome intimation. The duke of Fronſac is arrived at the age which you ſpeedily will deem marriageable. My daughter is in the ſame predicament, and I ſhall be glad to ſettle her. If great fortune and great hopes, if grace, wit, beauty, and virtuous ſentiment, can render her worthy your alliance, I ſhould think to make her happy, and myſelf. The king,

who loves and eſteems you, far from oppoſing the match, will ſeize the opportunity of ſhedding new benefits upon your houſe. Thus has my ſecret eſcaped me, my lord: I wait your grace's anſwer, and am &c.

LETTER LXVIII.

To the ſame. 1752.

I Have received, my lord, your letter and your excuſes. It is a genteel refuſal, which you have with much addreſs endeavored to ſoften; but I underſtand you. You ſay that your ſon having the honor to belong, by his mother, to the auguſt houſe of Lorrain, you cannot diſpoſe of him without its approbation. I aſk your pardon for my temerity: but, however, I muſt tell you, that it was no favor I begged: it was one I meant to beſtow. My

daughter has every requiſite to crown the ambition of a prince; and for all that, is not worthy the alliance of the illuſtrious duke of Richelieu: ſhe muſt take patience. I almoſt bluſh at my blunder: I find we neither of us knew ourſelves. &c.

LETTER LXIX.

To the dutcheſs of BOUFLERS. 1752.

YOUR german prince came yeſterday to my audience, and knocked me down with his germanic compliments. Oh! ſhocking creature! I verily believe there is neither grace nor wit among the germans; but then in revenge they ſay that the french have not a grain of good-ſenſe. I recollect a ſally of count Leſtignac upon that ſame prince. His highneſs having propoſed play, the count ſaid: I have no

objection; come, four louis a game. That is too low play for me, replied his highneſs. Well, cried Leſtignac provoked, let us ſtake on one hundred of piquet your whole petty dominions againſt a part of my lands. You ſee on this occaſion vanity repelling vanity. But after all, there is no harm in humbling a little thoſe princelings, who ſqueeze to death their ſubjects, in order to come and ſhine at Paris.

Is it true that you are going to marry mademoiſelle d'Erouville? Happy he who ſhall have her! She is handſom, modeſt, graceful; and, what is the main point in matters of love and marriage, ſhe is young.

But on the matrimonial ſubject, I have a great girl, whom I muſt alſo quickly ſettle. This gives me the awful notice that I grow old, though vanity and my glaſs ſhould ſwear the contrary.

How hard the lot of women! They live not, that is, they pleaſe not above fifteen years at moſt: it is well worth while to be handſom. Another ſign of age in women is, when their heart becomes capable of friendſhip for their own ſex; for girls love nothing but themſelves. This ſign too I find in myſelf: I love you, and perhaps half a dozen others with a tenderneſs, of which I ſhould not have believed myſelf ſuſceptible. Friendſhip is a pleaſure at all times; but it is a want in age. I begin to feel that want, and this beſpeaks me on the border.

Farewel, my dear dutcheſs; let us take comfort: there is a happineſs peculiar to every age; ſtrive we to know and to taſte it. I embrace you tenderly. &c.

LETTER LXX.

To the marchioneſs of BLAGNI. 1752.

THE king dined yeſterday in public with the royal family, according to cuſtom; and I was preſent. With complacence did I admire the tender ſatisfaction he taſted at the ſight of his children, and that air of goodneſs he ſhows to all his ſubjects. He preſented fruits himſelf to three or four female cits of Paris, who were there. He is a charming man. I ſometimes tell him it is pity he is a king: for that ſpoils him. I will give you a freſh inſtance of his goodnature and politeneſs.

He chanced to be a hunting laſt thurſday in the environs of Choiſi. A neighboring gentleman's daughter, who had been taking the air on horſeback, and was returning home, happened un-

fortunately to fall. The king, who was within a hundred paces, perceived the tumble, and leaving abruptly his train, flew to the aid of the young lady, lept from his horſe, lifted her up, enquired if ſhe was not hurt, and conducted her himſelf to her father's. The moſt heroic part of all was, that the girl was very ugly.

Lewis XIV. is ſaid to have pulled off his hat even to beggars: I have ſeen his ſucceſſor do ſo to ſome that were not much better. That ſtamp of goodneſs he bears everywhere about him, inſpires love, while the air of majeſty diffuſed over his perſon, commands reſpect, and announces what he is.

Howe'er obſcure his wond'rous birth had been,
The world, on ſeing him, her lord had ſeen.

The duke of Villeroi has related to me an anecdote, which is perhaps new to you. During the minority, the king

of Perſia ſent into France an ambaſſador, who at his firſt audience was ſo ſtruck with the beauty and air of the young monarch, that, forgetting the reſpectful ceremonial uſed on ſuch occaſion, he ran up to him, claſpt him in his arms, and embraced him with a tranſport, which gave ſome trouble to repreſs.

But now I conſider that talking of that dear prince, puts all elſe, and even you, out of my mind. Are you well? Do you ſtill love your friend? For my part, I begin to perceive that friendſhip is the life of the ſoul. Love is a temporary pleaſure: but friendſhip is one of all ſeaſons, and I prepare my heart to taſte it in all its joys. Farewel. &c.

LETTER LXXI.

To the ſame. 1752.

THEY ſay you are very merry at Villars: are you not aſhamed to be merry in the abſence of your friends? This morning at the king's chapel I ſaw a little charming face, and was in act to go and embrace it, taking it to be yours. But alas! I was miſtaken. Do you ſtill think of me? Do you love me ſtill more and more? Is the marquis ſtill fat and jolly?

Poor Marigni is well, and makes you his compliments: he has a good heart, but his head is not anſwerable.

Pray, do you know, madam, that we have got a new miniſter of foreign affairs? and that that miniſter is honeſt Rouillé? He is not a ſhining character; but he is a man of application

and integrity: the king has taken him, till he can do better. Mean time, as his department is the moſt difficult of any, I do not know how he will contrive to do it juſtice. Other miniſters have only orders to give; and, unleſs they want to diſtinguiſh themſelves by projects, all is eaſy: they have but to conſult their clerks, who think and write for them. Foreign affairs are quite another thing: the miniſter muſt be thoroughly acquainted with the intereſt of the various princes, their genius, often their caprices, the myſteries, or rather the darkneſs of policy; he muſt know how to ly and to cheat. For which reaſon that department does not ſuit an honeſt man, nor therefore mr. Rouillé that department: he will be a dupe to others; never they to him.

I have ſome deſign of going to ſee the entry of the pope's nuncio: you

will doubtleſs go along with me. You muſt partake my follies, as you partake my heart. They ſay this entry will be magnificent. I ſometimes conſider the pride of prieſts, and fancy Saint Peter never took it into his head that his ſucceſſors would ſend embaſſies, and place themſelves without ceremony above kings. However, the prejudices, which ſupport their grandeur, diſſipate by degrees. The pope, ſays Monteſquieu, is an old idol, incenſed through habit: perhaps a hundred years hence he will be incenſed no more.

Farewel, my dear friend; for this title is to me ſweeter and more reſpectable than that of marchioneſs; I kiſs your little daughter's roſy lips and yours. &c.

LETTER LXXII.

To mr. ROUILLE', *miniſter of ſtate.*

1752.

YOU have good reaſon to ſay that the diſpatches of the duke of Mirepoix are not ſo favorable as he imagines. They cajole him with diverſions, pamper him with entertainments, and are in the mean time making ſecret preparations for war: this is what I think and what I fear. He ſays that the king of England has aſſured him, with his own mouth, of his pacific intentions: that prince may be ſincere, but I do not believe it. In truth thoſe engliſh are a very odd people. I never loved them, though their wiſdom and generoſity are ſo highly boaſted. They are rapacious, unjuſt, and conſequently natural enemies to other nations. I

own however without difficulty that among them are very valuable men. But in general, that people is extreme in every thing, in vice as in virtue. An engliſhman, who is wicked, is a monſter: an engliſhman, who is good, is almoſt a god: but the good are rare.

Mr. de Briſſac, who returned from that country ſome days ago, ſays, that more great crimes are committed in England within the ſpace of a month, than are committed in the reſt of Europe during a whole year; that there are none but old women who believe in God and go to church, and that the whole religion there conſiſts in hating the pope and burning him yearly. However, all that is no buſineſs of ours: we have only to prevent the evil deſigns of that evil nation againſt us. I hope the duke of Mirepoix, who has both zeal and penetration, will not ſuffer

himſelf to be outwitted, but will give us timely notice. I deſire, ſir, you may ſend him the incloſed, and am, &c.

LETTER LXXIII.

To the ſame. 1752.

ACCOUNTS from America are highly pleaſing. As in all appearance that vaſt continent will prove the ſubject of the war, it is moſt important to make friends there. I do love thoſe honeſt ſavages, who have ſo great eſteem for *the captain of the french and his valiant warriors.* They offer us ſo cordially *the right hand of their brave youth*, that we muſt beware of refuſing it. Their nation, which *counts above ten thouſand moons, is preparing to regale their wives and children with the carcaſes of the engliſh*, and to eat its conqueſt. It ſwore by the *great ſpirit*,

when it gave us *the calumet of peace.* Though I do not approve of eating the dead, yet we muſt not fall out with thoſe good folks about trifles. I hope this alliance will turn out more uſeful to France than the vain embaſſy of Siam, with which Lewis XIV. made ſuch a clutter.

The french, whom every nation in Europe hates, envies and imitates, are however eſteemed, by men barbarous indeed, but ſimple and true, becauſe they are goodnatured and humane. The french nation is perhaps the only one in the world that is beneficent by temper. Others are ſo only by caprice or intereſt; and ſo a huron makes no difficulty to ſay: *A frenchman is a man like myſelf.* One hears daily of riſings and revolts in the colonies of other nations: but thoſe ſcarce ever happen in ours; becauſe we have as much the

talent of making ourſelves beloved, as others of making themſelves hated. You too have that talent, ſir, though you be a miniſter. Continue to deſerve the king's eſteem and that of the public by your abilities and ſervices: men like you are rare.

I have the honor to be, ſir, &c.

LETTER LXXIV.

To the counteſs of NAVAILLES. 1752.

I Do not think the conduct of your german king at all extraordinary. The very worſt of princes take a pride in doing juſtice to their ſubjects. They conſider them as animals ſubſervient to their intereſts and pleaſures; nor do they chooſe they ſhould devour each other, as we part dogs fighting. Robbers in their dens obſerve alſo juſtice

among themſelves: nor is any thing wonderful there.

No more do I admire the conduct of that ſame prince with regard to mr. de Chauvelin, who is an honeſt man, and might have been of great uſe to him. He will repent it: the great cannot commit ſmall faults, more than the ſmall great ones.

I am much obliged to the remembrance of the ambaſſador: expreſs my ſenſibility in your firſt letter. I ſhould rejoice to ſee him again amongſt us: but, as nothing yet occurs that is fit for him, he will be pleaſed to ſtay. The king, who loves him, will think of him; or I take upon me to make him do ſo. And now I recollect, we are to have a grand hunt the day after to-morrow, and ſhall paſs by your caſtle; which will afford me a fine opportunity

of dropping the proper hint: you may be ſure I ſhall not let it ſlip.

Here eternal dulneſs reigns, particularly over the king: nothing can divert him. Somebody has ſaid that beggars are unhappy by being always beggars, and that kings are ſo by being always kings. This ſaying contains a profound and ſolid meaning. I pity Lewis XV. for being a king: he were happy, if but a private perſon; he has every requiſite for that character. But the crown makes him miſerable, becauſe he has a feeling heart. A prince has two families, his own, and the great family of the ſtate; which gives him conſtant ground of affliction. At leaſt the moſt chriſtian king is ever in this predicament: he never is, more than I, happy but in hope. Yet alas! hope is often but a pleaſing dream. Irus, laid on ſtraw, dreams himſelf

grown enormouſly rich. He begins to build, and live like a lord; he weds a charming wife; upon which the pleaſure wakes him, and he finds himſelf again on ſtraw. Such is hope.

I ſhall ſee your niece with pleaſure: whatever belongs to you, is dear to me. They ſay ſhe is pretty and ſenſible: I love her beforehand, and ſhall endeavor to ſerve her, if ſhe will but give me leave.

Farewel, my dear counteſs: embrace me, pray. &c.

LETTER LXXV.

To the marquis of CURSAY, *commander in Corſica.* 1752.

IT is, ſir, in gratitude to the genoeſe that the king has ſent you into Corſica. The ſame motive engages you to ſerve them, and everybody approves your conduct. The republic has long waſted herſelf in carrying on a ſucceſs-

leſs war againſt rebels: ſhe muſt put an end to it. The buſineſs is not to beat the corſicans, but to give them peace, of which they ſtand as much in need as the genoeſe, whom they call tyrants, not perhaps undeſervedly.

But we here are afraid your genoeſe officers will ſpoil all: they are jealous of foreigners proving mediators. Envy, which is the weakneſs of the Italians, particularly of the Genoeſe, will often put your patience to the teſt, becauſe they would have all the honors of a peace, which they are themſelves incapable of making. Deſpiſe them, ſir; and do yourſelf honor by doing your duty.

The corſicans are at preſent, with regard to the republic of Genoa, in the ſame ſtate the dutch were, almoſt two centuries ago, with reſpect to their maſter and tyrant Philip II. After

many battles and ſieges, the rebels take a new name: they are no longer revolted ſubjects, but irreconcilable enemies. Then might deſtroys right, and levels all. For this reaſon the corſicans make high demands, and the genoeſe will grant them nothing but a pardon. They talk like maſters incenſed at rebel ſlaves: but this tone will not hold. The great point is to preſerve the ſovereignty of the republic, and to content the corſicans. It is a moſt delicate affair, referred therefore to your prudence, and that of mr. Chauvelin. The king's honor and word are plighted: a motive more than ſufficient to excite your zeal.

As to me, ſir, I ſincerely wiſh you all poſſible ſucceſs: you are highly worthy and highly able to obtain it. I wiſh that fortune, which ſeems to have greater ſhare in the affairs of this world,

than capacity and qualification, may ſecond your endeavors. &c.

LETTER LXXVI.

To mr. de MACHAULT, *controuler-general.* 1752.

YOU intend, ſir, to make war upon the forty privileged robbers who are ravaging France. I love your ſpirit, ſo cannot blame it. The real wealth of the ſtate is ſaid to amount to twelve hundred millions of livres, and two hundred private perſons poſſeſs at leaſt one half of it. Here is no proportion, and a vaſt abuſe. I think with you that the king, in granting to the farmers-general the duties on importation, never had, nor could ever have any intention to ruin his ſubjects. It is a monopoly which inſenſibly ſwallows up all the funds of the kingdom. It ſeems there-

fore but juſt to call thoſe gentlemen to account; and I am perſwaded that if the operation be performed with care and fidelity, it will pour above three hundred millions into the king's coffers. You will ſo, ſir, do a ſignal ſervice to the ſtate, and acquire with poſterity the glory of that Sully, who was ſo worthy to ſerve good king Henry IV. &c.

LETTER LXXVII.

To mr. ROUILLE'. 1752.

YOU ſay, ſir, that the king has actually fifty ſhips of the line and thirty frigats: but is there not in this account a little exaggeration? Have not you put in the number thoſe you deſign to build, but which do not yet exiſt? If your account is exact, it is aſſured that France will be in condition to face the Engliſh, whenever they ſhall think fit to attack her; and ſo I devoutly hope.

Poor Albemarle watches all your operations with a reſtleſs and jealous eye; but he dare no more complain. In fact, it is ridiculous to find fault that a man ſhould be building at home and enlarging his habitation. I know not who adviſed the king to make this new promotion of commodores and other ſea-officers. Methinks ſo much noiſe was unneceſſary: it was exhibiting to the reſt of Europe, which will not fail to take umbrage at ſuch exhibition. However, we have none to fear but the engliſh.

But, dear ſir, if you have at length got a marine, have you alſo ſailors? That is the main and moſt difficult matter. The french love neither the ſea, nor the ſervice of the colonies. I tremble therefore by anticipation, and dare to ſay that France will never make a figure as a maritime power. Mr. d'Argenſon

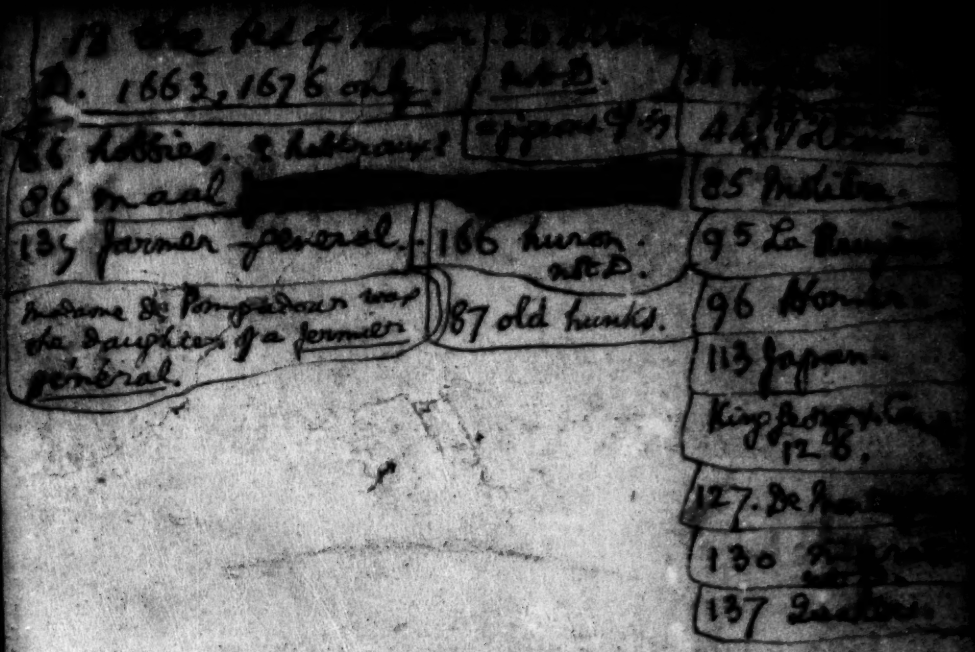
has juſt broke half the officers of the regiment of Guienne, who demurred at going over to Canada, and becoming food, as they ſaid, for ſavages. This temper prognoſticates no good. I imagine it therefore the moſt eſſential point to encourage the ſea-ſervice; and that will be attended with abundant difficulty.

Old Maurepas is jealous. He was heard to ſay publicly: 'My ſucceſſor 'will ſo manage as to deſtroy the french 'marine at laſt.' I hope you will give him the ly. However, the king is highly ſatisfied, and the nation honors your zeal. Lewis XIV. ſhone but the ſpace of four years on the ocean: if you make Lewis XV. ſhine longer there, you will be ſomewhat more than man.

I am, &c.

THE END OF THIS VOLUME.

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1663, 1676 and
Hobbies. 2 Hobbies
86 Naval
137 farmer general.
Madame de Pompadour was the daughter of a farmer general.
166 Huron.
87 old hunks.
85 Indians
95 La
96
113 Japan
King
127. De
130
137

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